

CONTEMPORARY RAJASTHANI POETRY

Translated, with an Introduction, by

I K SHARMA

Foreword by

V K GOKAK

RAJASTHANI BHASHA SAHITYA SANGAM (ACADEMY)

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

It was with a view to making the contemporary Rajasthani poetry known to the readers of other languages of India, and of the world approachable only through the medium of English, that the Rajasthani Bhasha Sahitya Sangam (Academy) decided to publish this anthology. Prof. I. K. Sharma, who had earlier edited the Rajasthan number of 'Poet', which contained translations of some Rajasthani poems done by him, was naturally thought to be the best choice for this prestigious project. It is certainly a pleasure for us to see the task finally accomplished.

As indicated by him in the Introduction Prof. Sharma took up the work of translation not by any set pattern or by having any outlines before him. He took up poems as they caught his fancy during the course of his reading, or appealed to him because of their peculiarity of style and newness of thought-content, and mode of expression. As such, the collection is neither intended to be nor should be taken as a representative one. Being a publication of the Academy, we would have very much liked to see it as representative of all major trends in Rajasthani Poetry. Circumstances permitting, attempts will be made in future to bring out more volumes in this series so as to include those poets who deserve to be included.

We hope, the book being the first of its kind in Rajasthan will be received in literary circles in the spirit in which it has been prepared and presented.

Rawat Saraswat

Chairman

Akha Teej
1979

Rajasthani Bhasha Sahitya Sangam
(Academy) BIKANER

"If one is uneducated in one's own literature one cannot hope to acquire education in any serious sense by dabbling in, or by assiduously frequenting, any other."

F R Leavis



TO THE MEMORY
OF
MY MOTHER



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No book can be completed without the co-operation and good-will of friends and institutions. This applies to this book too; I wish to record here my debt and gratitude to them both.

I am grateful to the Rajasthani Bhasha Sahitya Sangam (Academy), Bikaner, for having given me this project. I also take this opportunity to express my grateful thanks to Shri Rawat Saraswat for his valuable co-operation in collecting the material for this book.

I owe a special debt to Prof. V K Gokak for not only readily consenting to write a foreword to this volume but also for making certain perceptive observations on the salient features of contemporary Rajasthani poetry. His foreword is indeed a great gesture of love to me, to Rajasthan, and to Rajasthani. Who knows his foreword may as well inaugurate a new era for Rajasthani in her homeland ?

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I K S

CONTENTS

Foreword	...	xi
Introduction	...	xvii
Anna Ram 'Sudama'		
Tiwali	...	3
Banwari Lal Mishra 'Suman'		
Chetak	...	15
Panna, The Saviour	...	19
Chandra Prakash Deval		
After My Death	...	23
Chandra Singh		
Loo	...	30
Badali	...	37
Ganesh Lal Vyas 'Ustad'		
To A Poet	...	43
Freedom	...	47
The Parliament Of Liars	...	53
Kanhaiya Lal Sethia		
Day	...	61
Fear	...	63
Poetry	...	65
The Law Of Nature	...	67
The Needle	...	69
Kishore Kalpana Kant		
The Gulf	...	73
I Am A Bachelor Lover Still	...	77
Krishna Gopal Sharma		
City	...	83
On His Seventieth Birthday	...	85
To A Man In The Making	...	89
Madan Gopal Sharma		
The Bird	...	95
The Wedge	...	99

Mani Madhukar		
Vision	...	105
An Experience	...	107
Three Cheers For Vietnam	..	109
In A Hurry	...	113
Nand Bharadwaj		
The Dark Fortnight	...	119
Narain Singh Bhati		
Miran	...	139
Paras Arora		
Accounts	...	157
The Awakening	...	159
Why And What For	...	161
Raghuraj Singh Hada		
Shall I Die Again And Again ?	...	167
How Long	...	169
Rameshwar Dayal Shrimali		
My Master	...	175
My Village	...	179
Rawat Saraswat		
The Call	...	187
Famine	...	191
Sanwar Daiya		
Coal	...	203
In The Country Of The Neutrals	...	207
Satya Prakash Joshi		
Prayer	...	213
The Moth & The Lamp : A Conversation	...	215
Be Open-Eyed	...	219
Tej Singh Jodha		
The Drinking Snake	...	225
Bad Times Have Thrown Me	...	227
Vishwanath Sharma 'Vimlesh'		
Friendly Advice	...	233
A Lecture On The Hindi Divas	...	243

FOREWORD

Shri I. K. Sharma, who has himself been writing Indian poetry in English, has placed his talents at the service of the poetry in his mother tongue. He wrote an essay for the Sahitya Akademi on contemporary poetry in Rajasthan. He has now prepared a carefully selected anthology of contemporary Rajasthani lyrics and translated them into English. This is a foreword to the anthology in English translation.

Rajasthan has been the land of heroism, chivalry, romance and high tragedy, through the ages. The Middle Ages in India derive much of their colourfulness and grandeur from the annals of Rajasthan. But many must have wondered, as I used to do, in what manner modern Rajasthan is related to its medieval glory. To read this volume of lyrics is to find a deeply satisfying answer to this perplexing question.

Narain Singh Bhati's *Miran* reveals to us the reverence and pride with which modern Rajasthan looks up to Miran. Addressing Lord Krishna, she is made to say :

"I wrote off all the magic bonds of my
wedding
And took off the ties of my mortgaged life.
You do not know . . .

How in loving you this maddened fish
Has crossed the unknown seas."

'Suman' writes on Maharana Pratap's war horse, *Chetak* and on *Panna, the Saviour*. We experience a perfect sense of harmony with the Rajasthani poet who is thrilled by the annals of Rajasthan.

Contrasted with this response to his history, the Rajasthani poet's response to his geography and immediate environment is full of a sense of poignant tragedy and unbending heroism.

Life, says Chandra Singh, is "trapped in a pit of fire". When a loo blows

"The camel that goes without water
For days together,
Rushes, in the high days of loo,
Three times a day to water."

The mere sight of a cloud will send a son of the soil into raptures :

"Vadali (cloud) came down from heaven
Like a maid from a well
who, seeing her sweetheart before her,
Leaned with her pot and fell."

Tej Singh Jodha's *Peenau Sanp* exposes a local horror, which may be either fact or fiction. Kanhaiya

Lal Sethia, who seems to specialise in Haiku-like brief lyrics, has a pretty one on *Day* :

“Time tills the sky with the plough of the
moon

Driven by the buffalo of darkness
And sows the seeds of stars :
Then grows
The golden harvest of Day.”

In *The Dark Fortnight*, Nand Bhardwaj has given us a desparate picture of the typical Rajasthani village :

“A poor souvenir of Time
Left behind under the starry sky.”

It is not as though the Rajasthani poet does not find time to be at ease in the midst of universal values and have some innocent fun. There is interesting brooding over love in Madan Gopal Sharma's *The Wedge* and good fun in Kishore Kalpana Kant's *The Bachelor Lover*. The India-wide frailty of using English words, while speaking the mother-tongue, is made fun of in Vimlesh's poem *A Lecture On The Hindi Divas*. Satya Prakash Joshi has a poem on *Words* which are “endowed with blood”. Kanhaiya Lal Sethia writes on *Poetry* and says that it is

“a brand from the blazing fire
burning in man's heart.”

But this does not last for long. Tragedy, sarcasm, and indignation once more draw the Rajasthani poets back to themselves. It could not have been otherwise. A region which said "my head is bloody but unbowed" when it faced a mighty enemy for centuries in feudal times, cannot be expected to sit speechless and crest-fallen when many of our own representative in the 'largest democracy of the world' become our worst enemy on our own soil. The exquisite irony of Vimlesh's *Friendly Advice*, the grim horror and sense of tragedy that spend themselves in magnificent satire and vituperation in Ustad's *Freedom* and *The Parliament Of Liars* are too poignant to be forgotten. There is Mani Madhukar's *Three Cheers For Vietnam* in which he admires the heroism of a little nation which challenged a mighty power on earth. The scales, even of feudal glory, drop from the eyes of Rawat Saraswat who, in *Famine* exclaims .

"Those kings and queens gave away the
jagirs.

These leaders of both sexes issue permits.
Neither the style of work nor the times.
Separate that from this.
Those who were starving, weak, and
innocent,
Are starving, weak, and innocent even
today."

And the poet concludes this observation with saying:

“Sons of sand !
Rise and make men of yourselves !
Your kicks will turn the tide of the times.”

Modern Rajasthani poetry may not probably be more than half a century old. May be, the dawn of its renaissance has not lingered for long like a polar dawn on the horizon, revelling in the romance of colour. But one realises with deep satisfaction how beautifully it has allowed all the major movements in Indian life and letters to play on the heart-strings of its gifted singers and evoke from them such sweet, subtle and resonant music.

I feel sure that every lover of Indian poetry would like to read this bunch of poems and renew the pleasure for himself and others from time to time.

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INTRODUCTION

I

Some years ago I edited the Rajasthan number of *Poet*. That small venture created a sensation in the literary circles of Rajasthan since it was the first attempt to project the poets of Rajasthan to the outside world. Many people outside the state came to know for the first time that a language like Rajasthani exists and flourishes in Rajasthan. All along they were under the impression that Rajasthan was out and out a Hindi-speaking state.

This confusion was mainly caused by the use of a new bifocal term, Rajasthani, which meant both: (i) the writers of Hindi, Rajasthani, Urdu, Sindhi living in Rajasthan, and (ii) the Rajasthani language. Earlier, the name that was commonly used for Rajasthani was *Marwari* or Maruvani. To put it in alignment with other languages (following one State, one Language formula) a new name 'Rajasthani' was coined keeping in view the other names like Kashmiri, Panjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali etc. Rajputana (the State) became Rajasthan and Marwari (the Language) became Rajasthani. This geo-political re-christening of the language covered all literatures written so far under different names: Mewati (Alwar), Dundhadi (Jaipur), Marwari (Bikaner and Jodhpur), Mewari (Udaipur), and Hadoti (Kota, Bundi, and Jhalawar).

However, it should not lead a reader to believe that Rajasthani poetry is as new as the word 'Rajasthan'. The word 'Rajasthan', politically speaking, is thirty years old and historically speaking, about hundred years old. But the history of Rajasthani poetry is more than seven hundred years old. The richness of this literature, though not much known to the modern reader, can be judged from the fact that Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, paying compliments to it, observed: "It is essential for the modern Indian youth to study Rajasthani literature... I am eagerly awaiting the day when a full-fledged department of Rajasthani will be established in the Hindu University..."¹ (translation mine) Tagore, deeply impressed by its distinctive flavour, said: "The *Bhakti* literature we find in every province. Everywhere the poets sang of Radha and Krishna in a key of their own. But the literature that Rajasthan created out of her blood is unique. And it is not without reason... The heroic sentiment and emotion, enshrined in every little song of Rajasthani language, is the original asset of Rajasthan, and the pride of India at large. It is spontaneous, sincere, and nearer to nature. My friend Kshitimohan Sen introduced me to Hindi poetry. Today I have got a new thing. These stirring songs gave me quite a new approach to literature."²

Suniti Kumar Chatterjee, in his foreword written in Rajasthani to a book in Rajasthani, commented :

1 Quoted by Udairaj Ujjwal, *Rajasthani Bhasha*, 1960, p. 5

2 *Modern Review*, Vol. LXIV, (Sept. 1938), p. 710.

"To take pride in the ancient Marwari literature of Rajasthan is the bounden duty, not only of the Rajasthanis but also of all the Indians. In the garden of medieval culture and literature, the only literature that flowers and is also beautiful is that of Dingal literature. Its pieces of poetry laden with fragrance and colour once adorned the garden of Indian literature."³ (translation mine) But it is highly ironical that no university in Rajasthan has so far established a full-fledged department of Rajasthani. (Even in Jodhpur university it is an apology of a department !) Resolutions, very polite and pious, regarding the opening of the department in state universities have been passed. But they pathetically await their implementation in dusty cup-boards. Like stale food they are 'mouldering in the larder'.

When other languages are striving hard to push their frontiers ahead—and at the present political moment all their efforts are directed to one end: to prove themselves international—it is regrettable that Rajasthani has to fight for her survival in her homeland. The generous landlady has been systematically brought down to the status of a despicable tenant and is allotted a poor tenement in the sprawling bungalow near the backwall. Now she depends for her upkeep and general welfare on the fickle charity of the new lord. Savagely unfair !

³ Chandra Singh, *LOO*

II

Rajasthan, unlike many states of India, is a multi-lingual state. Here Hindi, Urdu, Sindhi, Panjabi, besides Rajasthani, are used as a means of day-to-day transaction and also of literary creation. Out of approximately thirty million people more than twenty million use Rajasthani in their everyday life. People living in thatched huts in remote parts of Rajasthan and those living in modern bungalows in big towns speak this language, with minor variations, with perfect ease and understanding.

During the thirty years (1947-77), about three hundred books of poetry, about fifty collections of short stories, and a dozen novels, according to a conservative estimate, have appeared. This achievement may not appear, at first glance, very striking. But it is, of course, highly creditable that the Rajasthani writer accomplished so much although he was pitted against a set of harsh circumstances. He laboured under the curse of non-recognition : his language had no recognition at the national level, he had no recognition at home. He was booed and brushed aside, was declared senile or infantile by the new literary high-brows and their camp-followers. In such circumstances a literature without its inner strength and strong fibre would have withered away. The high-brow hostility and indifference, on the contrary, stirred the Rajasthani writer to quiet, steady work, and he, sure of himself and with trust in his future, wormed his way through this painful period.

The man who waged an undeclared jihad against the injustice done to Rajasthani was Rawat Saraswat. He raised his banner of revolt by floating a literary journal *Maruvani* in 1953. Through this medium he attracted all the wandering talents to a common platform and asked them, more by example than by precept, to rededicate themselves to the cause of Rajasthani. He converted the wavering to his point of view and activated the flagging. His efforts soon spread a new wave of hope among writers, and the opponents who dreamed that Rajasthani would die of neglect and senescence, suffered a severe setback. The period of moults was mistaken for a period of serious ailment.

Right from the days of the freedom movement the Rajasthani poet had been in the vanguard of national literature. In 1944 Meghraj Mukul sang his famous poem *Sainani* at Dinajpur. Commenting on it, I wrote: "As Addison brought Philosophy out of closets and libraries and took it to tea-tables and coffee-houses so Mukul brought Rajasthani out of courts and libraries and took it straight to the broad highway of national literature. His *Sainani* became a craze and the whole generation went Mukul-mad. Even at present whenever a little disturbing sound is heard on the borders of this country, many mini-Mukuls go out into the street singing a hundred variations of the same theme⁴." In the thirties Rajasthani was extensively exploited by the politicians. Jai Narain Vyas, Hira

⁴ *Indian Literature*, Vol. XVII, No. 3, p. 31.

Lal Shastri, Manik Lal Verma, Bhairon Lal 'Kala Badal', and a host of other poet-politicians composed patriotic songs to inspire and establish direct contact with, the masses. The people's language was used by the people, for the people. Great patriotic speeches flowed from the public platforms. But after Independence when Rajasthani did not get its due, Ganesh Lal Vyas 'Ustad', who is known for his candour, lamented :

When the work is done
Rajasthani is crushed under the chair.

On the front of creative literature too, the pen had not run dry. In 1941—this year is as important in the history of Rajasthani literature as the year 1798 in the history of English literature—a poet, who was and is defiantly unsocial, came out with a slim volume of poetry. It was *Vadali* or *Badali*. The poet was Chandra Singh. The book at once caught the imagination of poetry lovers in India and they hailed it as a great literary masterpiece that had appeared after a long interval. Later, the book won him the 'Ratnakar Puraskar' & 'Baldeodas Padak' of Nagri Pracharini Sabha, Kashi. The poet established the language and the language in turn established the poet.

Chandra Singh is undoubtedly the father of modern Rajasthani poetry. As it is difficult to write about communism without bringing in Marx, so it is well nigh impossible to write on contemporary Rajasthani poetry without referring to Chandra Singh. With him one age ends and another begins.

His *Vadali* made him the most popular and most towering poet in the pantheon of Rajasthani literature. *Vadali*, written in a traditional style, became a household word. Interestingly enough, the creation soon submerged the creator : Chandra Singh was known and called by the name 'Vadali' in his own region. Also, during the leisurely conversation and the sessions of evening gossip the people at large quoted couplet after couplet, without knowing the poet, from his book. It was doubtless a real triumph of writing. This book, besides being valuable for its poetry, is fascinating for its intimate tone, and exhilarating for its panoramic portrayal of desert life. As long as a fleeting cloud remains an object of temptation in Rajasthan, this book will neither age nor superannuate.

Another book of enduring value of Chandra Singh is *LOO* that appeared, after over a decade of poetic silence, in 1953. Again, the theme is nature but the dimension is different. Commenting upon this book, the late Suniti Kumar Chatterjee wrote in a foreword to the book : "Now comes his second book of poetry with an awful and formidable message of LOO (Hot Winds), a speciality of Marudesh. Loo and clouds are complimentary as if they are Shiv and Shakti, the symbols of life and death..."

"In these poems the poet Shri Chandrasinghji has created a new world where the use of language side by side with emotion is a thing to watch and admire." (translation mine) A few couplets I have

included in this anthology will justify, I hope, his observation.

Chandra Singh thus combined in himself the three roles of saviour, path-finder, and mentor. He saved Rajasthani poetry from sinking deep into the quagmire of local, domestic, and feudal themes. To him goes the honour of releasing it from the prison-house of sowl and sycophancy, churn and quern, where the genius of the Rajasthani poet was for long cribbed and confined. For the first time the poet looked up to the sky and wrote, without the fear of a mad and muddled landlord, as his fancy deemed it fit. Quietly, and significantly that too, Chandra Singh worked out a revolution that changed the course of Rajasthani poetry. Nature remained no more a mere vassal of, an ally to, the chosen theme: it became an independent subject of poetry. This innovation finally gave him the higher role of a mentor whom every promising apprentice approached for inspiration and guidance.

Nature thus became a pet subject with every upcoming poet. It is interesting to note that many poets took it to be a mission of their life to pay homage, howsoever puerile that might be, to Nature. Nanu Ram Sanskarata, Narain Singh Bhati, Sumer Singh Shekhawat, Gajanan Verma, Kanhaiya Lal Sethia and others tried their hand at depicting the various moods of nature: summer, winter, rainy season, dawn, dust-storm, and dark clouds were made the themes of their poetry. But none could

match the genius of Chandra Singh in the precision and dignity of diction and in the newness and brilliance of images. The habit of treading the same track finally led to a ludicrous situation: a poet, in his attempt to outdo all others, merely enumerated in a poem the benefits of the various trees found in Rajasthan. What a fall, my countryman !

Another figure of considerable standing is Ganesh Lal Vyas, popularly known as 'Ustad'—the poets' poet. He is the exact opposite of Chandra Singh. Instead of looking to the forces of nature for inspiration, Ustad looked to the forces of society that have a direct bearing on the life of human beings. He represents the heroic spirit of Rajasthan without its feudal trappings. Words tipped with fire tumbled from his pen. He made poetry (broadly speaking, literature) a powerful instrument of transforming human society. True, he did not assimilate the ultimate truth; however, he exposed the immediate falsehoods. All that was spurious, doublefaced, and corrupt in society he relentlessly lashed out at with gusto and with 'disgusto'. He was a deadly enemy of feudalism and a bitter foe of capitalism. Therefore, some critics who see more ideology than conviction, more tactics than compulsions of time and personality in the writer, dubbed him a communist in a hurry. But those critics who are familiar with the Indian literary scene know it fairly well that the Indian writer had already turned his critical attention to the problems of Indian society. Tagore had given a clarion call to the writer in his

well-known *Gitanjali*; Mulk Raj Anand had published his famous *Untouchable*: Prem Chand had brought out *Godan*.

Ustad was a true poet of the people, their unyielding champion. He lived iron and wrote steel. Never in his life was he motivated by the considerations of money, fame, or friendship. Hence, no book of his poems could appear during his life-time. (A collection of his poems was brought out after his death by the Rajasthan Bhasa Prachar Sabha, Jaipur). This poet embodies all fire and thunder, all the masculine energy and the muscular anger of Rajasthani poetry. The posture of defiance and radicalism of the new generation of poets appears a pale smudgy imitation of his.

Ustad began his poetic career when India was struggling to gain freedom, when the dumb-driven people of his Jodhpur state were fighting to throw off the feudal yoke. His fight thus was directed against two unscrupulous enemies. Hence the figure that always floated before his mind's eye was that of a humble man, a drained man, a helpless man who needed words of strength and courage. The long fight consequently toughened his spirit and freed him in the process from all dross. He became a living institution of transparent anger. Nothing then escaped his attention. His pen recorded every minor sensation of his heart.

There is sufficient evidence to prove that Ustad gave a whole-hearted, full-throated support to the

government when it took measures to ameliorate the living condition of the masses. This was soon after Independence. Of a sudden there was a change in his attitude. He became hypercritical of the government. It however does not go to prove that there was any change in his value-scheme. His sympathies were where they were. The change occurred because he felt cheated by his own great dreams. His great expectations led to a great disappointment. Irrepressible poet that he was, it was beyond his power to put up with knaves and charlatans, quacks and crooks, hoaxes and swindlers of multiple hues scattered all over the country. His pen spared none. Even Nehru could not escape his poetic censure. He wrote :

They have duped the public
this new blood practises all forms of
trickery,

even Nehru's vision is jaundiced:
this house, therefore
is bound to tumble down.

How true, how assertive, and how prophetic ! The chief force that animates his poetry is his total identification with the common man. It is on this account that his poetry never grates; rather, it casts a rugged charm of its own on the reader. To apply the scale of aesthetics blindly to his poetry will therefore be an act of elaborate foolishness. He was the angry old man of Rajasthani poetry fiercely

sincere to his finger tips who used his ammunition never on a housefly but always on the hungry wolves.

I have dwelt mainly on these two poets because they represent the two main streams of Rajasthani poetry. many poets included in this book and also those outside of it, owe a substantial debt to these two titanic figures. However, I do not wish to suggest that the new poets were vigorously tied down to the apron-strings of these poets. They evolved in their own way and fashioned themselves according to their background and aptitude. But how can one tend to overlook the pervasive influence of the old guards? How can one question their seniority, their innovation, and their achievement ?

Another figure that deserves our critical attention is Vishwanath Sharma 'Vimlesh' He can claim to be close to Ustad in his mission of life. But the road he chooses to follow is irrevocably different. Like Ustad, he castigates the ills and enemies of society but his weapons are wit, humour, farce, satire, and caricature. Sometimes he blows up his object with an exaggerated humour and sometimes he slices it off neatly with a sharp satirical blade. He is the laughing wizard of Rajasthani poetry who can keep vast multitudes of people under his spell for hours with his superb sallies of humour. The crowd he attracts wherever he goes is a thing to be seen to be believed. Although fifty, he retains the buoyancy and zest of an adolescent and the sense of wonder of a child.

Brought up in a region where water is scarce and gold is in plenty, his poetry incidentally acquires the limpid character of the one and the alluring character of the other: it at once tempts and satisfies. The material of his poetry is thoroughly indigenous, drawn from the life around: the mannerisms of seths, the stupid pleasures of grasswidows, the cunning of beggars and politicians, and also what the newspaper supplies: the language fanatics, the political elections, the ads, fads, fashions, and stunts. An example will not be out of place here.

Before the emergency, the one institution whose ghostly unholy hand was seen (day in and day out) everywhere wherever anything went wrong in India, was CIA. Vimlesh trivializes this situation by establishing far-fetched connections.

Today I had a sudden strain in my right knee.

What's the reason ?

Wife said: today son also came from school
early during interval.

These two events took place at the same time.

I think

the CIA must be at the back of them.

His book *Nau Ras Main Ras Hasya* is replete with examples of this kind. He is a Puck sitting with crackers on the roadside watching unblinkingly at the rolling ripples of mankind and aiming unerringly at those who err and falter.

Other prominent practitioners of this art are Buddhi Prakash, Anna, Ram 'Sudama,' Satya Narain Prabhakar 'Aman,' who, through their satirical writings, successfully show the inconsistencies and incongruities of Indian life and character

Well, many poets saunter about the corridors of history in our time in quest of characters who can fit into their poetic vision and at the same time give them a sense of belonging to the community. Their looking back in time however is not nostalgia, a mere weeping for paradise lost. It is pure, natural love for the land one belongs to—the land which Kipling called "One spot beloved above all". Their history and culture, despite a series of ups and downs in past, give them no sense of grief nor any depression as is felt today by many European and American writers. An American poet wrote; "I write about myself, my home, my street, and my city, and not about 'America', the word that is the chief enemy of modern poetry". On the contrary, a Rajasthani poet would say: "I write about myself, my home, my street, my city, and *also* about Rajasthan which is 'one spot...beloved above all'". He writes about Pratap, Durgadas, Chetak, Mirah, Panna and others who, with the passage of time, have become the by words of bravery, devotion, fidelity, sacrifice or any of the higher virtues humankind is capable of. It is no hero-worship: it is a worship of the abstract virtues seen concretized in human form. It matters little then whether the pivot of the poem is Pratap or Prometheus, Saint

Joan or Mira, Gandhi or Lincoln, Saitan Singh or Napoleon.

The poets rooted in this tradition are Banwari Lal Mishra 'Suman', Narain Singh Bhati, Girdhari Singh Parihar, Nathu Singh Mahiyaria, and a few others. These poets have written not short (as is the English tradition) but long poems of epic dimension. A few of these poets followed the style of oral poetry, that is they repeat a leading line at the end of each stanza. The chief virtue of this repetition is that it bridges the gulf in a great measure between the reader and the poet. This kind of poetry is not only to be read; it is to be read *aloud*.

Some modernists, on the other hand, have written poems in free verse. And their number is increasing day by day. A few poems of this genre included in this anthology will give the reader a glimpse into the Rajasthan that was.

This brief sketch of contemporary poetry will not be complete without a remark or two on the young brigade of poets led by Mani Madhukar (who has won the Central Sahitya Akademy Award), Paras Arora, Tej Singh Jodha, Nand Bharadwaj, Rameshwar Dayal Shrimali (who has recently won an award of the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy), and others. These poets are university graduates, and they are quite familiar with the literature written beyond the frontiers of this country. From China to Chile, from Spain to Japan—all literature that comes into

the country is their delectable dish. T. S. Eliot, Mayakovsky, Shelley, Tolstoy, Kierkeggard, Ezra Pound, Chekov, Kafka, Sartre, Camus, and a score of other names are not new to them. Unconsciously, they have absorbed their mood, tone, style, and outlook. Like their counterparts abroad, they too make bold experiments in technique and coin new words to convey new experiences. They have introduced a wide variety of themes and idioms into Rajasthani poetry.

All that was old
was burnt to ashes.
the new leaves sprout everywhere.

(*The Awakening* : Paras Arora)

Whether they write about their village or about an incident at a far-off place, their style and tone are evidently much different from that of the poets of the preceding generation. English words too find a respectable place in their poetry. These poets are the ambassadors of new ideas, conveyers of new agonies, and also the bridge-builders between hearts nurtured on different ideologies and systems. The cross-fertilization of cultures that is taking place on a large scale in the modern world, despite its opposition, has begun to make its impact, howsoever slow and imperceptible at the moment, on their poetry.

Rajasthani poetry, for that matter, literature, has lagged behind a little not only because the politicians

had let it down at the crucial hour but also because the English-knowing intellectuals of the state did not care to serve their language and literature. These intellectuals showed no interest in, or concern for, the writings right under their very nose. Each Indian language, on the other hand, had a Tagore, a Subramanyam Bharati, a Gokak, an Amrita Pritam, a Sankara Kurup, a Firaq, a Bachchan but unfortunately Rajasthani had none. It was solely left to the care of the old professionals. The time thus lost in the race can be made up if gifted writers, not ambitious writers with divided loyalties, come forward with sincerity, zest, will, and foresight.

III

This anthology, I believe, gives a fair representation to the poets of the old order, the new order, and the middle order—from Chandra Singh to Chandra Prakash. Many poets do not find a place in it: the only reason is the limitations of space and of the translator. No disrespect is intended to anybody.

Chandra Singh, a reader of this book will note, welcomes the much-cursed and much-coveted forces of Nature—Loo and Vadali; *Narain Singh Bhati* presents Miran as a breaker of tradition; *Ustad* launches his full-blooded offensive on the mounting corruption and the moral decline in Indian society; *Mani Madhukar* admires the heroic courage of the

people of Vietnam; *Rawat Saraswat* gives an adult call to the poor to organise themselves against the rich; *Sanwar Daiya* pities the elite who do not see the obvious and refuse to see beyond their doorsteps; *Nand Bhardwaj* wants to liberate his village from the curse of ennui and inertia; *Anna Ram 'Sudama'*, suggests, through his mythic bitch, a remedy for the diseased old order where nothing but money reigns; *Rameshwar Dayal Shrimali* exhorts his countrymen not to behave like the proverbial monkeys mentioned by Gandhi anymore; *Tej Singh Jodha* asks the people to be ever-alert on the battle-field of life; *Raghuraj Singh Huda* refers to the problem of misery and starvation; *Vimlesh* scoffs at the language fanatics and unworthy friends; *Madan Gopal Sharma* longs for the days gone by; *Satya Prakash Joshi* pays tribute to the goddess of poetry as well as to the new forces of society; *Paras Arora* questions the competence of the modern man to solve all the problems of life; *Kishore Kalpana Kant* sings romantically of his beloved : poetry; *Kanhaiya Lal Sethia*, teaches us to look at life with detachment; *Banwari Lal Mishra 'Suman'* catapults us into the Rajasthan that was; *Krishna Gopal Sharma* pays homage to the genius of the famous Telugu poet Vishwanath Satyanarayan; and *Chandra Prakash Dewal* refuses to accept a paradise for himself before bringing in social deliverance for all.

IV

Generally, the anthologies are prepared in a very

'standardized' manner: the poets submit their poems along with their translations and the editor compiles and introduces them to the reading public. In my case it was a long, lonely climb. First, I chose poems out of the books available to me, translated the selected poems in full or in parts if the poems were long, into a language which is far different from the original in nature, structure, pace, and rhythm, and also wrote the Introduction. I acted both as nurse and wet-nurse.

I knew I was not wholly competent to undertake such a big and difficult task, for I was not a committed reader of Rajasthani nor was I its accomplished translator. The friendly promptings of Rawat Saraswat initially persuaded me to carry out this task. But besides this, another important factor was at work: it was my deep and abiding love for Rajasthan whose sand and salt have nourished me for more than four decades:

In this spirit the book has been prepared. Slips and inaccuracies of translation, if any, may be regarded as the work of a probationer. The pages that follow will give, I hope, an unbiased reader in India and elsewhere a pleasant touch of fresh air

coming as it does from a land whose literary wealth is not yet fully known. To me, writing this book has been a great adventure.

I came to a great door,
Its lintel overhung,
With burr, bramble, and thorn;
And when it swung, I saw
A meadow, lush and green.

I K SHARMA

KALPANA

Tilaknagar, Jaipur

ANNA RAM SUDAMA (b 1923), a retired school teacher, is a poet of considerable merit and eminence. He was born in a lower middle class family in Udairamsar, Bikaner. His childhood passed in extreme penury. Because of this he had to discontinue his education after the eighth class. He did M. A. as late as 1962.

Nonetheless, he began his writing career quite early in life. He wrote both in Hindi and Rajasthani with equal felicity and command. His book *Piroj Main Kutti Byai* made him famous and the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy, in 1968, gave him the highest award of poetry. His *Andhi Aur Astha* (fiction) too won him an award from the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy in 1974. His other works are: *Maikati Kaya*, *Mulakati Dharati* (fiction); *Door Disawar* (travelogue); *Mewai Ra Roonkh* (fiction); *Utsuk Gandhi*, *Udas Bharat* (travelogue, Hindi).

His address : Near Petrol Pump
Gangashahar
Bikaner

टिवली

काल दादी नैं बुखार घणो हो
‘दादी नैं देखण वेगा आयो’
हूं डाक्टर वर्मा नैं कै आयो ।
वै हंसता हंसता बोल्या:
“कांइ सल्ला
अवकै दीसै—
डोकरडी आगीनैं जासी
पालै मैं माल खुवासी”

हूं बोल्यो, “जासी या रैसी
आं वातां मैं कीरो सा’रो ?
पण जे आ वात हुई तो
नूंतो तो नूंतै री जगां
सागै थारो कांसो न्यारो ।”

वर्मा जी बोल्या:
“अवार तो वीजी (Busy) हूं पण
आयो ही राख भरोसो म्हारो ।”

TIWALI*

Grandma had high fever yesterday.

Briskly I went to Doctor Varma
to tell him :

‘Come quickly to check up grandma’.

He smilingly replied :

Hello,

Grandma, it seems, will go beyond
and get us rich feast this cold season.

‘Go beyond or tarry here,’ I said

‘Who can help it ?

Yes, if it however happen
you will have a lavish dish to yourself
besides the regular one of the general party.

Varmaji gingerly replied :

I am ‘busy’ at the moment
but believe me, man,
I’ll come flying.

भालर वाजणा री वेळा ही
मोटर आई, हार्न वाज्यो
सुणता ही हूं वारै भाज्यो
पण कुत्तडी कोझी ही रोवण जोगी
दिर रै थारो घणी मरै
करतां करतां
कीं दांत लगाया
गोडै तांडँ पैट फाड़ दी, अर
लकड्यां लारै आप दोडगी ।

देखतां ही
चर्मा जी वेगा सा वोल्या:
"दादी थारी पड़ी दरड़ मैं
म्हारै को वायड़ नीं
फीस गई भैस री पूँछ मैं
पैन्ट रा पीसा कुण देसी-
आयो तो वेमारी मेटण
तैं तो उल्टी गळै लगाई ।"

चर्मा जी नै राजी राखण
मैं पैलां तो, कुत्ती नै काढ़ी गाळ घणी,
पण कुण जाणी,
आगोतर कुत्ती रा काळा चाव्या-

It was the time of temple bells.
A motor-car came and blew the horn.
Listening, I rushed out of doors.
But there was a bitch in the way
this ghoulish creature,
infernal being,
may her hubby die !
Before I closed my curses,
she had clenched her teeth into him
torn his pants right upto the knee
and had run away to the stack of wood.

‘Damn your grandma’, Varmaji cried testily.
‘She is not my relation,
Damn your fee too—tag it to the tail of a buffalow !
Who will pay for the pants ?
I came here to cure the fever
conversely, it has clung to me !’

To keep Varmaji in good humour
first, I threw a hundred abuses at the bitch
but who knows
whether I owed a debt to this bitch in my last life

का ओङूँ हो वर्मा नै—
दादी रो देणो वाकी,
सोळै रिपिया फीस रा दीना, अर
जी सूँ ऊपर
सीख मैं एक हरी पत्ती भौर भलाई
ऊपर सूँ जोड़ा हाथ,
“माफ कर्या थे
हूँ तो कैणो भूल्यो
आज संमल’ र आयो
पिरोळ में कुत्ती व्याई ।”

X

X

बलवां री कुत्त्यां,
रोज बदलसी कुत्ता
वांरी कूखां मैं
मर्यादा पुरुषोत्तम आराम करैला
‘नूपुरे एव जानामि नित्यपादाभिवन्दनात्’
सूरज सो तपतो
कोई सामित्र मिलैला
आ सपने में मत सोच्या ।
आंरी गोदी मैं
जंकर रामानुज
रमसी गांधी गंगावर
द्वोङो ममता

or Varmaji had to pay off to grandma ?

Later, I gave him his fee—rupees sixteen
and also parted with a green hundred rupee note
for his farewell,

and on top of it all

I said with folded hands :

‘Pardon me, Sir.

I cleanly forgot to tell you :

be watchful while coming in

the bitch has her litter in the passage.’

X

X

X

Now the bitches of clubs

change their dogs everyday

and Maryada Purushottam¹ will lie snug in their wombs

Noopure ev Janami nita padabhi vandanat.

(I know the anklets only since I always deified her feet.)

They never can dream

that Saumitra², bright and brilliant as the Sun

will ever come to them !

अै कुअवसर रा कूकरिया
आगै जा
पूरव पिच्छम उत्तर दिक्खण
गळी-गळी मैं सीमा रेखा खींचै
भारत कोरिया कांगो
वलिन वियतनाम कित्ता ही
आं कुत्तां री माया सूं
आज खड़ा उदास पसीजै
हीरोसीमा कूकै ।

केई दपतर री कुरस्यां पर कुत्ता
कोडवडं मैं समझै
आंस्यां मैं पूंछ हिलावै
टुकडो नांस्यां ठा' लागै
कुत्ता हुया सरमहीण
दिन थोळै री कुत्ती राखै
अठली कुरस्यां सूं सन्तोस नहीं तो
अलसेसियन सी कोई
पेरिस इटली अमरीका री कुत्त्यां
मूंधै दामां मैं लावै
पण और जलमेला कद काळीदास
'अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा हिमालयो' ...

Think no more
that Shanker, Ramanuj,
Gandhi, Gangadhar
will ever roll in their laps !

Forget about it.

These curs of unholy alliances
draw dividing lines, wherever they go,
—and go they ahead of all
on all sides, east, west, north, south.
India, Korea, Congo,
Berlin, Vietnam, and many of their kind
because of their schemings
today stand listless and pale.
Also, poor Hiroshima bewails.

Many dogs in the office chairs now
pick up their secret signals
and wag their amorous tail through eyes,
and soon retire if they get a crumb of bread !
Our dogs, brazen-faced,
keep a bitch in broad daylight
if unsatisfied with the indigenous kind,
fetch an Alsatian at a high price
from Paris, Italy, or America.
Will Kalidas be ever born to them ?
Astyuttarasyam dishi devatatma Himalayo....
(The god-souled Himalaya lives in the north..)

वै कद मानैला
भारत री सीमा-रेखा
त्याग
'जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादिपि गरीयसी,'
खाओ-पीओ मौज करो
अँ पिच्छम रो पापी पाठ पढैला ।

टिवली, बात ठीक है
म्हारै याद-पत्र पर
अवार एक चितराम उभरै कै
मोटर आवै हानं वाजै
लियां वैग डाक्टर वर्मा उत्तरै
तैं दांत लगाया पैट फाड़दी
वर्मा विगड़ै
पण टिवली आज मनै सन्तोस
तूं स्यालो तैं ठीक कियो,
पीसै रो पुतळो वो
वण जनजीवण रै प्राणां सूं वेसी
पीसै नैं प्यार कियो ।

Will they ever consecrate themselves
to the borders of India,
her long sufferings ?

*Janani Janmabhoomisch swargadapi gariyasi*³.

(Mother and Motherland are far superior to Paradise.)
Rather, they will ever parrot here
'Eat, drink, and be merry'
this wicked lesson of the West.

Tiwali ! Fine.

An image flashes across my mind :
a motor-car stops and blows the horn,
Doctor Varma, his hand-bag in hand, comes down,
and you try your teeth on him
and tear his pants.

And he loses his temper.

But, my sweet Tiwali,
you did a wise thing.

I am very happy with your blessed deed.
That slave of coins, full of guiles,
fondly loved coppers
more than human life !

* The name of the bitch in his long poem *Pirol Main Kutti Byai*.

1 Lord Ram

2 Laxman.

3 All Sanskrit quotations in the poem are used ironically.

BANWARI LAL MISHRA 'SUMAN' (b 1919) is one of the poets who are deeply rooted in tradition. He began writing poetry quite early in life under the guidance and inspiration of Shri Suryakaran Pareek.

He was educated at Mandawa and at Ved Vedang Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, Pilani. His Sanskrit education did not expose him (profitably so ?) to modern influences. A devout pundit that he is, he chose his themes either from history or from the ancient classics of India. He displayed his talent in writing on traditional themes in a traditional manner. He wrote fervidly on religious and historical subjects.

His *Delyan ko Divalo*, published at Calcutta, shot him into fame. On it the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy gave him Kavya Purushkar. Also, literary associations of Bombay, Bhagalpur, Jhunjhunu, and Nawalgarh publicly honoured him for his contribution to literature.

Other well-known books of his are : *Prem Pravah* (1969); *Gaurav Gaan* (1970). He also brought out a collection of his Hindi lyrics—*Sarjana* in 1971.

At present, he lives at Chirawa (district Jhunjhunu).

चेटक

अणगिण धावां सैं धायल हो पण राणाजी नैं पीठ लियां,
वच निसर्घो सेना समदर सैं मन मैं लोद्यां की घूट पियां,
द्विपकै वैरी लारै लाग्या राणां नैं आज संभाळै कुण ।
चढतै दिन का साथी वो'ळा पण ढळती सांझ संभाळै कुण ॥

जद आगै आयो एक खालियो चेटक धोड्हो मरी छलांग,
टप-टप टपकै हो रगत सरीरां धायल हो'री च्यारूं टांग,
पड्तो-पड्तो मुड़-मुड़ देखै टळटळ ढलती पळकां दुण-दुण ।
चढतै दिन का साथी वो'ळा पण ढळती सांझ संभाळै कुण ॥

चेटक सोबी अै रण माळै सै जूझ पड़चा मेवाड़ी वीर,
बलवेद्यां की गोद्यां पोद्या बडभागी भाला सा रणवीर,
चढतै नैं निरखणियां वो'ळा पण ढळती सांझ पिढाणै कुण ।
चढतै दिन का साथी वो'ळा पण ढळती सांझ संभाळै कुण ॥

CHETAK*

Indented deep with scars, Chetak¹
with the Rana on its back
made its way noiselessly through the sea of arms,
but the foe did not let it go alone,
chevied it without a hint. Not far from there
it saw a stream flowing full before him;
it soon sprang up, not caring for its bleeding body, and
flew over the crystal stream.
Falling, it looked at the Rana again and again
with tears racing down his fading eyes.

His fire half done, Chetak moaned:
the pick of Mewar, the mighty warriors, brave and
[daring,
lion-hearted like the Jhala fought this great war,
and alas ! this war-altar has steadily grabbed them all.
Isn't it vicious, Chetak felt,
the world worships the rising sun
but none there is to cheer up the flagging one ?

भीगी पलकां रांणु निरखै अर चेटक मन मैं करै विचार,
जीवण साथी राणाजी नैं वेमोकै छोड़ चल्यो मंझधार,
अै बीहड़ मैं राणाजी नैं साथीङ्गां विना रुखालै कुण ।
चढ़तै दिन का साथी बो'ला पण ढळती सांझ संभालै कुण ॥

चेटक निरखै राणाजी नैं राणा की आंख्यां नीर भरै,
जळ गरम कमळ सै नैणां को अणगिण धावां की पीर हरै,
पलकां मूंदी सुपनूं आयो इवकै यो वार संभालै कुण ।
चढ़तै दिन का साथी बो'ला पण ढळती सांझ संभालै कुण ॥

With liquid eyes, the Rana looked at his steed
and Chetak very feelingly replied:
Alas ! I am leaving you in midstream,
friendless and forlorn, who knows
who'll care for you in this dark wood ?
Saying thus, he turned his dying eyes to the Rana and
hot tears stood in his beautiful eyes,

{ saw:

* From *Delyan ko Diyaloo*.

1 The famous horse of Maharana Pratap.

पन्ना धा

बडभागण कंवर उदयसिंह नैं ऊवी दिन रात रुखालै ही,
हो उदय परायो जायो पण जायै सैं बडकै पालै ही,
बनबीर भलो कोनी अंको पैल्यां सैं मनस्या जाएँ ही,
पग-पग चौकस मा पन्ना धा निजरां सैं चाल पिछाएँ ही,
तलबार सिरां पै तण री ही पन्ना विन आज रुखालै कुण ।

पति नैं कर चौकस सावधान झट पिछलो द्वार खुला दीन्हूं,
दक कंवर फूल सो फूलां सैं वारी सैं वार मिजा दीन्हूं,
सोचण को ओसर हो कोनी दो द्यण मैं काम पटा दीन्हूं,
आंचल सैं बछती आग ढकी इकलोतो लाल कटा दीन्हूं ।

PANNA, THE SAVIOUR*

Unblinkingly she tended the lucky prince¹
gave him love more than a mother could do,
'Banbir is evil incarnate', she knew
and also knew his evil designs. His vicious
sword always hung over the prince's head
but she took care of it all, all, alone.

Quickly she gave her man a wink
to unlatch the backdoor,
in a flash she passed out a basket
brimming with flowers through a window
—the prince beneath the flowery layers;
she gave the senseless no chance to smell
and slipped her lone child into the princely bed,
and looked up :

the next moment she saw the brute
splitting her child in two.

* From his book *Delyan ko Diwalo*

1 Udai Singh

CHANDRA PRAKASH DEVAL (b 1949) is one of the youngest poets writing in Rajasthani. Born in a village in Udaipur district, he had his early education at Udaipur. At present he is engaged in research at Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Medical College, Ajmer.

His first book of poems *Pagi* appeared in 1977. His poetry, cluttered up with words of difficult origin, deals mainly with social realism. Like the other young poets of today, he too represents the stern mood of protest.

ਮ्हारी मौत पछै

यूं तो हूंस हार्योड़ी मानखो
मन माडांणी भालै
आपघाती नंदी रे
ढावै री पग-डांडी रो सरणो
म्हारी मूमल
म्हनैं गंगाजळ अर गळदान
री उड़ीक कोनी

पण नित हमेस हर छिण
रिवतां-रिवतां
म्हें अणद्धक मर जाऊं
तो संस्कारु लोय रे सांचै
दल्योड़ी यूं
म्हारै तरपण सारु मत ना ढीजे
म्हारा श्राकळ-वाकळ गीत
अवस कदे न कदे
किणी न किणी मुजाण रो
मायो फोड़ उगैला

AFTER MY DEATH

Ordinarily

a man whose faith is in his own self shaken
takes refuge in the pathways of a treacherous river.
I do not, my sweet-heart,
long either for Gangajal¹ or for Gaudan².

My life is chipping off each day
each moment.

If perchance I die
then, you, who are shaped in the mould of customs,
needn't worry at all about my last rites :
my silly odd songs, I am sure,
will one day blossom forth bursting the head of some
[wise man.

म्हारी गजवण
थूं अंगै ई डरजे मत
फगत उण दिन री
उडीक राखजे
कै जिण दिन
अँडी ग्रजोगती अर अचीती पटकी पड़ै
कै लोग-वाग चोर नै
चवडै-वाडै चोर बतावै
कै जिण दिन
टळ्योडी पेंचूटी नैं पंपोळती
परधै रा पग
ठाणै नौं पड़ै
ओ खिलको देख
कै खटीक रो पीसणौं छाली खावै
कै जिण दिन
चाहै कूट लूण री पुडतां
पायरियोडी घरण सूं
आदमी थोर रै आंगै
उगण रो मतो
द्युष्काय दे

My Mighty Love, You needn't fear too !
Rather wait for the day
when something not yet heard or seen like a thunderbolt,
will be heard and seen,
and people openly call a thief a thief !
Or till that day
when bureaucracy, seeing a goat eat the food of a butcher,
walks falteringly.
Or till those times
when man gives up hopes of growing like cactus in this
[land
laden with layers of lime all over.

कै जिए दिन
डोकरिया रे धूजतै पगां
अै झडता धान-भूपडा
नेगम ठायो भालै
कै जिए दिन
रावळियो वगत
ठीमरपणा रो वेवळी उतार
आपरे अंगां अचपळायां अंगेजै

भावी रे उण मंगळीक टारणी ही
वादीलै वगत री आंट
अर म्हारी निसरडाई सूं
अगत गियोडी म्हारी जूण
मुगती रे सिरे मोडे पूर्गेला
अर हथीकी पूर्गेला

Or till that hour
when these falling reedy huts
stand erect on the uncertain legs of an aged man.
Or till, Time itself, the great actor,
flings off its mask of haughtiness
and willingly wears cheerfulness

My irrepressible soul
till now wandering because of the arrogance of Time
and my own stubbornness
will reach, though late, the door of deliverance
on that far-off auspicious day.

It shall.

- 1 A Hindu custom of pouring a few drops of 'Ganga water' into the mouth of a dying man.
- 2 Another Hindu custom of giving away a cow in charity at the time of one's death.

CHANDRA SINGH (b 1919) is the celebrated Rajasthani poet. As English Lake Country was a passion to Wordsworth, so is the Rajasthan of scorching sun and sand-dunes a passion to Chandra Singh. This Rajasthan provided him inspiration to write two well-known books : *Badali* and *Loo*.

He was born at Birkali, Sri Ganganagar. He spent his youth at Bikaner where he had his college education. In 1951 he came to Jaipur and launched the publication of *Maruvani* in collaboration with Rawat Saraswat in 1953.

Besides being a poet, he is an excellent translator too. His translations of *Raghuvansh* and *Meghdoot* into Rajasthani were immensely praised by such a distinguished scholar as Dr Vasudeo Sharan Agrawal. Chandra Singh also translated gathas of *Gatha Saptashati*, a selection from which was printed under the title *Kaalajai Ri Kor*. His other works are : *Dilip*, *Balsad* and *Jafarnamo*.

His present address : D 6 Meera Marg, Banipark Jaipur.

लू

कोमळ-कोमळ पांखड़्यां

कोमळ-कोमळ पान

कोमळ-कोमळ वेलड़्यां

राख्या लूआं ध्यान

 × ×

सूरज किरणां चाव में

फूटी कळी समूळ

लूआं दीसी सामनै

लागी हिवड़े सूळ

 × ×

तोवै ज्यूं घरती तपै

ग्रूपर तपै श्रकास

लू लपटां सं दिस तपै

जीव तपै इण तास

 × ×

चैती सौरम चूस ली

कळ्यां गई कमळाय

फूलां विद्धी पांखड़्यां

लूआं वाजी आय

 × ×

LOO*

O Loo !

Do not touch and burn
the petals of flowers
the new-born leaves
and the slender vines.

X X

The buds opened and advanced
to meet the oncoming rays,
but they retreated, hurt,
seeing the onrush of the blazing loo.

X X

Below

the earth burns red-hot
like an iron-plate,
above,
the deep blue burns red-hot,
all around it is the same:
Life is trapped in a pit of fire.

X X

O Terrible Loo !

you have sapped
all the subtle musk of spring,
the buds lost themselves beforer their bloom,
the petals fallen off wizened one by one.

X X

देख तपंती ताव सूं
मुरघर ब्रख रै भाण
हियो हिमाचल शूभ्रङ्ग्यो
वह चात्यो वरफाण

× ×

लूआं आय' र रोस मैं
बाली जद बणाराय
बड़े जतन सूं बीज सैं
राख्या धरा लुकाय

× ×

श्रूट जिका नंह ढूकता
पाणी पर दिन च्यार
सागी लूआं राज मैं
तीनां वखतां त्यार

× ×

खारो पाणी कूवटां
दिस-दिस बंजड़ भोम
उजड़ाया सा वसिया जठै
मिनखां नैं मत होम

× ×

जीव तिसाया जावतां
जोड़ा हूया ग्रधीर
डाल-डाल हिवडो हुयो
चालो चीरांचीर

× ×

The sun with his mighty looks
has ravaged our dear land,
even the cold heart of the Himalayas
seeing her agony, melted,
and ran in waves.

X X

The loo in her deadly rage,
grilled the flora of the earth,
but the earth, very ingeniously
hid the winged seeds
in her secret beds.

X X

The camel that goes without water
for days together,
rushes, in the high days of loo,
three times a day to water.

X X

O Terrible Loo !
Do not grill the people here.
Their villages already look deserted,
their land unfit for crops
and the water of wells far from sweet.

X X

The waterless ponds break in grief
to see all go back thirsty
from their charitable shores;
their aching hearts now scream in cracks
over the dry blistered beds.

X X

लूआं भले न सांस ली
तल्ल में चौर चलाय
बाढे ऊपर लूण ज्यूं
बाल्ल दी बुरकाय

× ×

सीधो सिर आपर थम्यो
टूट्यो सागी जोस
जाणे लूआं ताव सूं
सूरज भूल्यो होस

× ×

दो आतुर मन मिलण नैं
आमां-सामां आय
भेट्यां पहल्ना घकघकै
सूआं जीव जलाय

× ×

भूलै रूप वसंत रो
भूलै रुत वरसात
सीतल्लता भूलै आवस
सूआं रे उतपात

Yet the loo inexorable is not at ease
it piles grief upon grief :
it picks up the floating grains of sand
and showers them unblushingly
over the open crying cracks.

X

X

The fiery loo has struck even the Sun.
He moves dead slow at noon
as if he has lost his sap
and the track too,
and knows not where he is.

X

X

The lovers at their rendezvous
rush to hug each other,
the loo sways between the longing hearts:
they stand close but stand apart.

X

X

The loo alone reigns supreme here :
no chance visit ever by the Merry Spring.
Rain ! Rain is a far-off cry,
and Winter, a distant dream.

*Hot winds that blow in summer in Rajasthan. I have retained the word 'LOO' for its special charm. These stanzas are from his celebrated book *LOO*.

वादळी

जीवण नै मह तरसिया

चंजड़ भंखड़ वाढ

वर्ग्ये, भोळी वादळी

आयो आज असाढ

× ×

आठूं पोर अडीकतां

चीतै दिन ज्यूं मास

दरमण दे अब, वादळी

मत मुरघर नै तास

× ×

आस लगायां मुरघरा

देस रही दिन रात

भागी आ तूं, वादळी

आयी रुत वरसात

× ×

नहीं नदी-नाळा अठै

नहं सरवर सरसाय

अेक आसरो वादळी

मरु मूकी मत जाय

× ×

BADALI*

O sweet Badali !

Today is the first day of Ashadh.¹

Kindly come around and spray gently over us.

The wild shrubs, fields, lands unfertile

all are craving for new life.

In these long waits

time moves slower than the snail,

would you, O Badali, show up your face ?

Let not this land go thirsty and pale.

This land looks for you with sunny eyes

rush in, sweet angel, rush in;

the rainy season has come but not you

tease us no more, dearie !

×

×

We have no rivers here nor any brook

even the tanks have gone dry,

you the last hope of this land

sweet tyrant, turn not away

and leave us dry.

×

×

थो मत जीवण, वावळी
डूंगर थोहां जाय
मिलण पुकारै मुरघरा
रम-रम घोरां आय

× ×

जोड़ कांगसी जोर मूँ
कुंडाळो करियां
वाळक मांगै वावळी,
भर दे तालरियां

× ×

भेट्या डूंगर खरदरा
खररो हुयो मुमाव
माजै गाजै गड़गड़ै
तेज दिखावै ताव

× ×

नम नूँ उतरी वावळी
ज्यूँ वेर्यां पणिहार
साजन सामां आविया
शुल्ख पट्टी युण वार

× ×

सौरन आवै सोगुणी
मिलियो घर नूँ भेह
दूंगे सांसां जग दिवै
हिवड़ै भीतर नेह

Waste not your life in hills and dales
this land is lowing for you,
come here, my crazy angel !
rejoice among the dunes.

X X

Even children have formed rings, holding hands
they go round and round and round,
and beseech you, O Badali !
bless our starving tanks.

X X

The hills have made you heartless
unfeeling and unkind,
hence you run across the sky
flashing, with creaking sound.

X X

Badali came down from heaven
like a maid from a well.
who, seeing her sweetheart before her,
leaned with her pot and fell.

X X

Miles of sweet smell rises from the soil
as the rain touches the earth,
it swells the hearts of young lovers:
they draw thickly that aroma in.

*CLOUDLET

1. In the north-west of Rajasthan people wait and wait for rain, not for days and weeks, but for months and sometimes years. Hence the importance of the first month of the rainy season i. e. Ashadh.

GANESH LAL VYAS¹ 'USTAD' (1907-65) was the most revolutionary of all Rajasthani poets. He was the least educated (studied only upto the fourth class) and also the most well-read, of them all. He wrote in English, Urdu, and Hindi, besides Rajasthani.

His life from the start was uneven. Born in a family of traditional Brahmins at Jodhpur he married outside his caste much against the directive of his community. Although he was an arch-enemy of feudalism, he began his service career in feudal lord's household. In Bombay, where his father went in search of a job, he worked as a jockey boy. There he happened to meet one day B. C. Harrimann, the editor of *the Bombay Chronicle*, in the Deccan Queen. His frank talks and open manners impressed the editor very much. Harrimann soon appointed the young boy in his office where he learnt English language and literature, politics, and journalism.

In 1930 'Ustad' joined, at the call of Mahatma Gandhi, the salt satyagrah movement and he was lodged in a jail at Beawar. When he came out of jail he went to Indore where he studied the life of labourers and the books of Marx and Engels. In 1938, alongwith Jai Narain Vyas, he founded the Marwar Lok Parishad. In 1942 all the members of the Lok Parishad including 'Ustad', were sent to Jalore Jail.

The poems written during this period nettled the government but inspired his rural audience. As a result, the wave of the freedom movement spread at a tremendous pace in the countryside. The poems of 'Ustad' and his friends were brought out in book form : *Garibon Ki Awaj* (The Voice of the Poor) and *Bekason Ki Awaj* (The Voice of the Underprivileged). But they were immediately proscribed.

After independence, his poetry attained new heights. He published no book of his during his life time. The only source of his writings now is *Jan Kavi Ustad* published by the Rajasthan Bhasa Prachar Sabha, Jaipur, after his death. On 29th October 1965, 'Ustad' died in poverty but not in obscurity.

¹ Most writers mistakenly call him Ganeshi Lal Vyas, which is factually wrong. His actual name is Ganesh Lal Vyas. I have verified it from the members of his family.

कवि

रे कवि अव जीवै मती, कविता हुयगी कोड़
विड़िद मांड कविता करै, छळ री चादर ओड़
छळ री चादर ओड़, डोड़ रा तीन बतावै
कीड़ां नै भगवान भरणै नै मारण सावै
उस्तादां री आण, दाण में विद्धणी व्यायी
तस्कर पोतैदार, पुराणा पापी न्यायी

पूज बडेरा आपणा, वै चारण कविराज
बीरां तरणै बखाण में कविता करी सुकाज
कविता करी सुकाज हालता रण में आगै
इण जुग रा कविराज, दोल सुणतां ही भागै
उस्तादां री आण, बखाणै जस हुकमत रा
कीड़ा कुरव बघार, कांकरा करदे पत रा

TO A POET

Oh Poet ! Live no more
Poetry is now a running sore.
The buffoons wearing masks have turned poets
and make those high that are low :
they deify vermin and enjoy themselves.
By Ustad I tell you :
the stable is teeming with scorpions,
thieves have become guards
and hardened criminals, judges.

Better pray to the ancient poets, the supreme

[Charan poets

who, by adoring heroes, adored poetry,
who led the armies to battle
unlike the moderns who flee hearing the war-drum.
By Ustad I tell you,
these moderns sing in praise of Power
and multiply vermin.

रै कवि मत गा वावळा, सिखर चढ़ा है काग
कांव-कांव री कूक मैं कुण सुणसी आ राग
कुण सुणसी आ राग, जीभ सूँ भाड़ अंगारा
पनपाया विख-भाड़, राख नैं करदे सारा
उस्तादां री आण, खोल वाणी रो नाळो
मिटे अंवारो घोर, लोक नैं मिले उजाळो

रै कवि, अब जीवै मती कविता कुरव गमाय
घर कीड़ा री सायबी, घर वाळां नैं खाय
घर याळां नैं खाय, पालणै पूत पराया
पड़पंची पतवार पकड़ पोड़ पोंचाया
उस्तादां री आण, खोवर्या सांड घड़कै
माथै चढ़िया रांड-भांड गंडकां ज्यूं कूकै

Oh Poet ! Sing no more in madness.
Who'll listen to your music amid this din ?
There are crows on the perch !
Breathe fire, my friend,
and turn trees and bushes to ashes.
By Ustad, I tell you,
open the flood-gates of your utterance
to finish the threatening gloom.
Let there be light all around.

Oh Poet ! Live no more amid this ruin of poetry.
These vermin, strange to see, eat up the near ones
and endear themselves to strangers :
these rascals have brought everything to utter ruin.
By Ustad, I tell you,
I see nothing around
save the street bulls bellowing
and vamps and clowns yelping like mongrel curs.

आ कैडी आजादी

लोग कवै सूरज ऊरो, पिण कठे गयो परकास
हाथ हाथ नै खावण दोड़े किण री राखां आस
मुलक री था कैडी आजादी
पूत-पितर में मच्यो छिनाल्हो, चाहूं दिस वरवादी

मिनखपणे री राम निसरग्यो, श्रेक पुजीजै भेस
दल-स्वारय सूं जन रा नेता, कियो पांगल्हो देस
सिपाई हाथां धूड़ उड़ा दी
कितरा तो टुकड़ां पर विकग्या, वाकी गांठ गमा दी

हितमिल काम करणे री वेळा, वंटवारै री राड़
मन मैला भायेला पाड़ा, जन रै घन पर धाड़
वण्यो है सारो मुलक विवादी
देस-भगत स्वारय में छळग्या, ईश्वर हुयगी गादी

FREEDOM

They say: the Sun has risen.
But where is the light ?
The right hand nibbles at the left
who do you think can help ?
What appalling freedom my beloved country has won
when father and son are engaged in acrid clash
scattering seeds of destruction.

The god of human kindness is dead:
only one livery is blindly prayed for.
The tin-gods of the masses, for their party gains
have paralysed this land,
and through police, brought it to a shameful pass.
Many sold themselves for scraps: others lost even
[inherited the riches.

This is the time for us to work together
but alas, time is lost instead in scrambles.
Even bosom friends have fallen out, to rob the
[nation's wealth.
The whole country is now a hotbed of wrangles.
The patriots too are now caught in a whirl of greed
with 'Chair' as their new creed.

ਮोਟਾ ਮਗਰ ਕੁਟਮ ਨੈ ਖਾਵੈ, ਨਿਵਲਾ ਮੁਗਤੈ ਡੰਡ
ਵਾਪੂ ਰੋ ਤਪਦੇਸ ਨੈ, ਸਤ ਹੁਸ਼ਾ ਸੌ ਖੰਡ
ਸਥਾਣਾ ਸੇਠ ਵਧਾ ਸਤਵਾਦੀ
ਖਾਦੀ ਤਧਾਗ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਵਣਗੀ ਜਨ-ਜੁਗ ਰੀ ਸਹਜਾਦੀ

ਨੀਚੈ ਜਨਤਾ ਰਗਤ ਵਿਕੋਵੈ, ਖਾਵੈ ਕਰਸੋ ਰਾਵ
ਊਪਰਲਾ ਮਾਖਗੁ ਖਾ ਜਾਵੈ, ਜਨ ਰੀ ਗਰਦਨ ਦਾਵ
ਮੁਲਕ ਰੀ ਮਾਡੈ ਨੀਤ ਫਿਗਾਦੀ
ਵਿਚਲੋ ਵਰਗ ਗਵੇਡੀ ਦੀਡੈ, ਲਿਧਾਂ ਦੋਸ ਰੀ ਲਾਦੀ

ਜਨਸੇਵਕ ਝਗੜਾ ਸੂਂ ਥਾਕਾ, ਸਤ ਰੋ ਘਟਗਧੋ ਭਾਵ
ਖਾਦੀ ਧਾਰ ਲਵਾਡੀ ਜੀਤਧਾ, ਜਨ ਹੁਕਮਤ ਰੋ ਦਾਵ
ਸੈਤ ਮੰ ਸਿਰ ਦੀਨਾ ਤਨਮਾਦੀ
ਜਨ-ਜੀਵਣ ਮੇਂ ਫੂਟ ਵਧੀ ਹੈ, ਮਾਥੈ ਚਢਿਆ ਸਵਾਦੀ

The strong crocodiles eat up the kin
while the weak ones in private wail.

Poor Gandhi, his message brushed aside,
is savagely torn to pieces.

I am grieved to think
that the cunning Seths have become the apostles of Truth,
and this Khadi, leaving poor households
has joined hands with them
and has burst into a reigning dame.

Far below, the farmer's grub is mere raab¹,
and the common run of people work sincerely hard,
but those on the top throttle the people and grab
[the cream,
and this middle class burdened with the failures of all
runs about like a stupid ass:
my country, to be sure, is rotting.

The honest servants of the public are weary of this row.
Truth is on the wane.
These glib talkers, wearing khadi, have held the reins.
These maniacs are seen in every chink
and the drunks step in at every bend.
Life in general is devoid of love and light.

तिकड़म री तिर जाय सिलावां' भलै लोक पर भीड़
फूट-फिकर सूं थक्या गजां रै, कीड़ा घरै घमीड़
समझ री सारी सान सड़ादी
इतम हुनर री आठत लाटै मरजीदान मयादी

मूट मिनख पिडतां नै हांकै, कळावन्त नै भांड
कळा-खेत मैं निसंक चरै है, रुखवालां रा सांड

कठै जद कूक करै फरियादी
जन रो जीवण खड़्यो कठधरै, न्याव करै अपराधी

मुलक री आ कैडी आजादी
पूत-पितर मैं मच्यो छिनालो, चाहूं दिस वरवादी

The boulders, through their strategy, float across at
[every point.

Good men, on the contrary, are trapped at every point.
Insects bludgeon the elephants, weary of rumpus,
in full view of the public.

The glory of wisdom has passed away.
Only yes-men are gaining heights !

Now fools drive the wise
and clowns, the artists.

The bulls of custodians roam about freely in the field
[of art !

How long will the cuckoo make a plaintive cry,
when the common man is in the dock
and the criminal sits on the seat of justice ?

What appalling freedom my country has won
when father and son are engaged in acrid clash
scattering seeds of destruction !

1. A very common and ordinary food of the rural folk.

सगळी मैफल रोगी

नवै गून री नेताजी री सगळी मैफल रोगी रे
दूकमत मिलना नोरवजारी चौडे होगी रे

रुद्रग्या लडवाळा

हे'र रुद्रग्या नउवाळा, ठेकां रा ठग धन लिद्धमी भोगी रे
नवै गून री नरक नाळ सूं सांचा मिनख निसरग्या रे
परमिटपंगी वोट मिल्या जद वात विसरग्या रे

रहजो जागतडा

हे'र रहजो जागतडा, ओ बद्दद वापडो भूखां मरग्यो रे
नवै गून में जन-जीवग्न री ऊकरड्यां रा कीडा रे
दिन-दिन में सो रंग करै उसला गोहीडा रे

अलगा ई रहजो

THE PARLIAMENT OF LIARS

The real fighters are lost forever
but
these pseudo leaders of a new vulgar kind
with a little power
are lost in black-marketing;
this whole assembly is a pack of liars !

Keep awake
for
these paramours of permits soon forget their promises;
good old men are far from this new infernal world
only swindlers can suffer it !

Be away from them
for
these chameleons without forgiveness
change colours a hundred times a day;
their blood teems with parasites
and on their account
this poor ox is starving !

हे'र अलगा ई रहजो ओ सेतां रा चर जासी बीड़ा रे
बापू जी री निरमल खादी द्वोड़ भूंपडी भागी रे
परमिटपंथी पैर लिवी जद, वासण लागी रे

महलां मोज करै

हे'र महलां मोज करै, तिकड़मिया ठग तड़बड़ रा त्यागी रे
बापूजी री द्याप लगाई, रगत विणजवा लागा रे
जनता माथै भोड़ पड़्यां रह जासी आगा रे

मत ना भरमीजो

हे'र मतना भरमीजो, आ बोट दलाली करसी नागा रे
द्यानै चुरकं नवा धाड़ी, दो बछदया ले भागा रे
ओं बछद बायड़ा नवै गून रा निकमा ठागा रे

चकमे चुणो मती

Don't be taken in by them
for
these paramours of permits
roll in harems, and
because of them
the unsullied khadi of Bapu has disappeared from hamlets
and emits odious smells.
They must eat up all green grass !

Don't be tricked by them
for
these impostors, cheats
donning cloaks of piety
bilk the ignorant masses
and make money
in the name of Gandhiji !

Don't send them at all
to seats of power
for
this witchery of votes will strip us naked:
these bullies and bandits of new blood
have kidnapped even the two bullocks¹ !

हे'र चकर्म चुणो मती, ढोळे पड़ जासी घर रा ठागा रे
नहूऱजी रे नेतर मार्य, रंग रो चसमो चढऱ्यो रे
नवो खून तिकड़म री सगळी पोव्यां पडऱ्यो रे

जनता लूटीजै

हे'र जनता लूटीजै, सतवाढां रो देवाळो कढऱ्यो रे
कांगरेस रा कागद मार्य लंबी चौड़ी वातां रे
बोट दिया तो नवै खून री पड़सी लातां रे

पोला ढोल घुरै

हे'र पोता ढोल घुरै पिण पोल उघड़गी रिसवत खातां रे

They have duped the public
this new blood practises all forms of trickery,
even Nehru's vision is jaundiced;
this house, therefore
is bound to tumble down !

Beware
hollow drums always sound well.
Hollow are now the followers of Truth.
Congress manifestos are full of tall talk.
If you vote them to power
you will get only kicks in return !

But one day
hypocrisy is exposed.
They were caught red-handed, taking bribe !

1. The party symbol of the undivided Congress.

KANHAIYA LAL SETHIA (b 1919) is the most prolific of all Rajasthani writers. He has brought out about two dozen books, many of which have been translated into English, Marathi, and Bengali.

Although born in an affluent family of businessmen, he was never lured by its temptations. On the contrary, he, untiringly, championed the cause of the poor and the underprivileged.

He is a poet of detached observation. His images are whole and unbroken. He communicates his ideas and impressions very ably through his apt choice of words.

His *Dharti Dhoran Ri* has become a classic sung in all parts of Rajasthan.

In 1976, he won the National Sahitya Akademy Award for his book *Leeltans*. His other well-known works are : *Minjhar, Galgachia, Kumkum, Dhar Kunchan Dhar Majlan, Ramaniya Ra Sortha*.

His address : Ratan Niwas
Sujangarh (Churu)
Rajasthan

दिन !

चगत वावै
अन्धारे रे भैसे स्युं
चांद रो हळ,
बीज
आजै रे सेत मैं
तारां रा बीज
जलां नीपजै
दिन री सोनल फसल !

DAY

Time tills the sky with the plough of the moon
driven by the buffalow of darkness
and sows the seeds of stars :

then grows
the golden harvest of Day !

डर !

पड़ी हाथी पर
कीड़ी री निजर
देख' र हालतो चालतो डूंगर
बड़गो विन में डर' र !

पड़ी कीड़ी पर
हाथी री निजर
देख' र जुल्यतो परतेख मोत
करली सूड ऊपर !

FEAR

The ant looked at the elephant
saw the walking hill
and would get into her hole.

The elephant looked at the ant,
saw: it was the walking death
and lifted his trunk !

कविता !

नासा री खिमता नै
तोलणी री
ताकड़ी है कविता,
सबदां रे भारे मैं
चमरण री
लाकड़ी है कविता,

सांच है सौ टंच
न नुवीं है
न पुराणी है कविता,
मिनख रे हियै मैं
उक्कती भोभर री
सैनाणी है कविता,

गुड़ है गूगे रो
उठा-पटक रो
अक्काड़ी कोनी कविता,
ओखब है आत्मा री
माटी री काया रो
माड़ी कोनी कविता !

POETRY

Poetry is a balance
to weigh the aptness of language.
It is real sandalwood
in a common heap of words.

Poetry is neither old nor new.
It is absolute, if true.
Poetry is a brand from the blazing fire
burning in man's heart.

Poetry is like sweet to the dumb :
it is no free-for-all
nor is it hire for the dusty old body.
It is a tonic for the soul.

नेमसर

चोर रा हाथ

साचा

पर्ण पर्ण काचा,

कीं न कीं कसर

रान्हि कुदरत नेमसर

नहीं स कदे' स रो ही

गिड-मिड ज्यातो

भानमती रो पसगर !

THE LAW OF NATURE

Thief.

His fingers are light
but his legs are heavy.

Nature must leave a dent somewhere
otherwise, this magic-box, long ago
would have burst into shivers.

सुई

नुई री निरमल
काया मैं
एक ही देकलो है
फेहं भी पड़े
वार-वार वंधगूं,
मैता मन तूं तो
हुयोड़ो पड़्यो है
चालणीवेख
मोत दो'रो है
यारो
व्यारी मैं स्यूं
निकलगूं !

THE NEEDLE

Only one hole
in the sleek solid body of a needle.
Still
it gets chained many a time.

My ragged Self,
you have holes
as many as a sieve.
To come out of this maze
is a big task.
Your journey is bound to be long.

KISHORE KALPANAKANT (b 1930) is one of the finest lyricists of Rajasthani. His readers, especially his listeners, are in constant danger of being fascinated by the melody of his poetry. The impact of Sanskrit literature and the oral tradition of Rajasthani poetry go a long way in keeping this trend alive in him.

He was born in Ratangarh, Churu. His education was very ordinary. In his youth he chose journalism as his career and has all along stuck to it. Also, he founded a literary mag *Olmon*, which soon became popular with budding writers and poets. This mag can justifiably take the credit for turning many a brick into gold. In 1967 the Sadul Rajasthani Research Institute, Bikaner, gave him the highest award of poetry. In 1969 a literary association of Calcutta gave him a cash prize of Rs. 1100/- on his translation work *Rutsanhar*. Other works of Mr. Kant are : *Koonpal Ar Phool*, *Shakespeare Ri Batan*, *Vishwanath Satya Narain Ri Batan*, *Nast Need*.

His address : Kalpana Lok, Ratangarh (Churu).

मैं सोचूँ हूँ

म्हे चेस्टा करां हाँ
 सिर-पगां रो जोर लगायने
 उमाड़ देवां
 दिन रे आज्जे मांय रोप्योड़ी
 सुरजी री किरणां नै
 जिकी मुरजादा नै कायम राखै
 अर जिको कई जोवै-परखै
 उगुने सांच भावै !

म्हे लाग्योड़ा हाँ
 अडी-चोटी रो बळ उलाढ़ता
 उमाड़ नांखां
 च्यानगुपत रे वाग मांय सूं
 चान्द री च्यानगी रो घटतो-वघतो रुंख
 जिण री सोरभ मांय रळ्योड़ी है
 इकलाण मैकार
 जिकी सुपनां नै पंपोळै
 जागतां रे मांयलै नै टंटोळै !

पग आज तकात म्हारै मूँ
 उपडीज्यो नीं किणी अस्तित्व रो वाळ
 अर म्हे वावळा होयोड़ा
 गुद रा घरां रा वारणा भूलग्या
 वां नै पगई-पोळां जागै' र
 कुमुगु मांडणा नल कर दीन्या

THE GULF

Our hearts are full of hopes.
We often try hard, and we say it openly,
that we will uproot the rays of the sun
planted deep in the sky,
that uphold conservative norms.
Strange, they appear true
even to a seeing eye !

We are after it.
We often try hard to uproot the tree of moonlight
that contracts and expands
in the garden of a bright fortnight,
whose enchanting smell
nurses the dreams of crazy sleepers.
It also looks into unapathetic hearts !

Till this day
I could not harm a bit.
And we in our wild frenzy
mistake our own doorsteps for those of others
and tattoo them with innumerable unholy signs
because feuds have ruined our foresight !

नवूं के

न्हुद रा पगल्या नुंडि सूं उपहीजता
आपसरी री अटंगयां मांय
लड़वडीजता सम नीं रैया !
आपुं आप चालतो रैवै बायरो
जिणसूं पांगर, फूलै, फलापै
रत-रत रा गाढ़-रुंख
आपैडि उठ आवै खेंखाट मचांवती
घणधोर आंधी
चड़कणा ढाला टूट जावै
पावरी नांकीजै गल्योही पेड्यां
म्हे आंधी रा वेटा कोनी
फेर उखाड़ण री म्हारी हूंस
विचारां रै लाग्योही दीवल
'मै सोचूं हूं नै'
म्हे आज-लग को सोच सक्या नीं !

के ठा कद

उर्ग' र उखड़ीजै

अस्तित्व रा गाढ़-रुंख

जंगी केई सदियां रा

चरसाती केई कागारोटी !

आवो अवै श्रेकला-श्रेकला चालां

तरस खावां

आप-आप री !

The wind follows its own rhythm.
It renews the life-cells of trees without prejudice
and quickens them to bloom;
the foul storm rises with a monstrous face
on its own, and the mighty branches
in no time become its kill,
even our headgears go off our encased heads.
But we are not the children of storm.
Our wish to crumble the trees shows
how deep white ants have eaten into our brains.
'I think and think and think'
and strange it is
I could not still make up my mind still.

We are unaware
how trees seasonal and centuries old
sprout and shed their lives.

Come, let us go alone, alone:
And let us pity one another too.

गीत

अळ्ठी-गळ्ठी अर गांव-नगर री घूळ घण्ठीई में तो छाणी ।

मिली न मन नैं मरवण सागी, अखन कुंवारो हूं अब-ताणी !

रूप मिलै तो रंग न ओपै, रंग मिलै तो रूप न भावै
रंग-रूप दोनूं मिल जावै, पण जाणै वयूं दाय न आवै
जीवणभर जो सूरत पूजी, वा सूरत नीं रळती लावै
स्थात् न जायी-जामी ओजूं, म्हारै मन री सरव-वैराणी
मिली न मन नैं मरवण सागी, अखनकुंवारो हूं अब-ताणी !

कई बार भरमां मैं भूल्यो, कई सूरतां उपरां रीभूल्यो
जद अैनाण मिलावण वैठ्यो, मनहो कदे न किण पर धीज्यो
चो उणियारो, वा रंगत अर वो रंग-रूप न किण मैं दीस्यो
ओळखाण नित सुपनै होवै, पण जागूं, जद वा अणजाणी
मिली न मन नैं मरवण सागी, अखनकुंवारो हूं अब-ताणी !

I AM A BACHELOR LOVER STILL

I have gone far and deep into the labyrinth of life :
the forlorn country tracks, the cities' thoroughfares,
but my beloved is nowhere seen.

And I am a bachelor Lover still !

If I find the form of my love, her colour is not to my
[liking
if I get the colour, her form is not to my liking
if perchance they both are according to my liking
their blend, curiously, is not to my liking,
The image I adored life-long I see not near nor far
nor any woman has yet borne that lovely form
that can without question become the ruler of my heart !

Long enough did I float amid the shining webs of my
[own fancy
long enough did the enchanting faces lure my wayward
[fancy,
when I tallied the signs I found them all wanting
and nothing did stir the spirit of my weird heart !
Those features, that thrill, that form and beauty I found
[in none
I met her invariably in my undisturbed dreams
but when awake, she flew away from the scene !

मेला देख्या, हाटां जोयी, आधी उमर ढूँढतां बीती
पणघट-पणघट किर्यो तिसायो, हर गागर नित लावी रीती
हर डूंगी घाट्यां मैं म्हारा गीत घणा ई हेला मार्या !
हर परवत रा भाठा नै मैं वैठ सुणायी मरम-कहाणी
मिली न मन नै मरवण सागी, अखनकुंवारो हूं अव-ताणी !

के जाणूं, किस्तूरी-मृग हूं, के जांगू, मृग-तिरसा म्हारी
के जाणूं मैं तिस्यो पपैयो, के जांगू, खुद री लाचारी
पण इतरी जाणूं हूं नेचछ, गीत जिकी रा गावूं हूं मैं
वा, कोई होवै, ना होवै, मैं तो हूं वस उण रै ताणी !
मिली न मन नै मरवण सागी, अखनकुंवारो हूं अव-ताणी

I went to fairs and to market places for her sake
scores of spring, in her quest, I lost in vain.

Moved I from well to well, yet parched, unslaked
I sounded each vessel there, found each one unwet,

[unfilled.

My songs gave multitudinous calls to her in each dale
to each rock of the hill I unfolded my grievous tale
but my beloved was nowhere seen.

And I am a bachelor Lover still !

Am I a musk-deer ? Is it all a mirage ?
Am I a Papaiyo¹ unfulfilled ?
Or, is it an acute compulsion of my heart ?
However, I am sure of this
that she for whom
the passionate strains flow from my pen
may be a mere phantom
but I am her undying lover still !
Though my beloved is nowhere seen
I am her bachelor Lover still !

1 Papiha. The bird, it is believed, always pines for his love.

KRISHNA GOPAL SHARMA (b 1944) is one of those young voices that despise everything that is 'foreign'. In this fierce and defiant mood he wishes to set on fire his own degree of M. A. (English), which, he feels, has created more distance than love among his fellow beings. He wants to confine himself, unlike other poets, to the sources and springs of his own culture, his surroundings, and his society.

His book *Chetan Ri Dhooni* represents that mood quite effectively. The book got the highest award of poetry from Rajasthan Sahitya Academy.

He lives at Ratangarh (Churu) where he was born.

सहर

सट्योडी, संकड़ी-'डे स'
काफी रा प्यालां मांय मर्योड़ी माली
जुवान-बोध
द्योर्यां री मुळक रा श्ररथ-विस्तार
नरमीज्योड़ा गुणाकार
सूमड़ा भागाकार
'स्टोवां' माथै उकळतो पाणी
गिधता आमलेट
आप-आप रा दिन-रातां रा रैड़ला
मूँडै लागी द्योरी श्र
'वकंसापी' आवाजां
शीत—आंख-मीच्योड़ो कबूतर
जोड़-तोड़, प्रेस-कंपोज
कंई गलत है
आदक ढंग ?

CITY

Drain-pipe trousers.

A dead fly in a cup of coffee.

The importance of being young.

The threadbare analysis of a girl's smile.

Dozens of mad couples.

Scores of bores.

Water sizzling on stoves.

Omelettes smelling foul.

The whirligig of egoistic talks.

A flirt and

feigned voices.

Music—close-eyed pigeons.

Manipulation like composing of press matter,
what in wrong ?

Primitive style ?

ਅੇਕ ਸੋਵਣਾਪੋ ਸਤਤਰ ਬਰਸ ਰੋ¹

ਸੂਰਜ ਰੀ ਕੇਈ ਤਦਾਸ ਕਿਰਗਾਂ
ਬਰਸਾਂ ਤਾਂਈ
ਮਲਵੈ ਰੈ ਕਿਣੀ ਫਿਗਲੈ ਅੂਪਰਾਂ
ਚੂਡਾਂ ਫੋਝਤੀ ਰੇਧੀ ।
ਨਾਗਡਾ ਠੂਠ
ਵਾਗੀਚਾਂ ਨੈ ਟੀ'ਧਾ ਦਿਖਾਏਤਾ ਰੇਧਾ ।
ਵਾਂਖਡੀ ਵਰਤੀ
ਆਡੀ-ਟੇਡੀ ਪਡਾਂਵਾਂ ਰੀ ਵਾਂਵਾਂ ਮਾਂਧ
ਹੋਲੈ-ਹੋਲੈ ਤਿਸਕਧਾਂ ਮਰਤੀ ਰੇਧੀ ।

ਅੇਕ...ਦੀਧ...
ਅਰ ਪਥੈ
ਬਰਸਾਂ ਰੀ ਵਿਰਖਾ
ਵਾਂਖਡੀ ਰਾ ਵੇਟਾਂ ਰੀ ਲੰਗਟ
ਕਿਰਗਾਂ ਨੈ ਦੀਧ ਕਰਹਾ ਹਾਥ
ਖਾਲ ਲੀਨੀ ।
ਸਤਖਾਂਡੀ ਮਹਲ ਵਣਧੋ ।

ON HIS¹ SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY

For years
the rays of the sun
in a sullen mood
shone on a heap of garbage
but bore no fruit.

The leafless trees
stared hard at the green gardens,
the arid land
in its irregular folds
sobbed quietly for long.

Of a sudden
the rain in her hands
held aloft the rays of the sun.
A seven-storeyed palace came into being.

हाँ, ओ ईज है
 सत्तर वरस रो डैण
 आस्था रे उण महल नैं चिणायो है ।
 संस्कृति री सोरम सरसायी है ।
 जिनगानी री ऊंचायाँ, ऊंडायाँ मांय
 उडती-डूबती
 उण री कलम री कोर्योड़ी मूरताँ
 श्रर मानवी-धरम री
 सदा जुवान सूरताँ
 धारो सत्तर वरस रो सोवणापो
 सनातन है
 उजड़ेड़ीं री सभ्यता मांय
 वसणियाँ मिनखा खातर
 सुरंगो सावण है ।
 सिरजण मांय सळ नीं है
 सर्वे माय
 इणनैं दावण रो वळ नीं है ।

¹ तेळगू रा महाकवि श्री विश्वनाथ सत्यनारायण री सत्तरवीं वरसगांठ ऊराँ ।

True. This seventy-year old man
built this palace of faith with conviction
and let culture have its aroma there.

Your span of seventy years
is a monument to eternity;
you portrayed well with a pen
that soared high and also deep
into the varied realms of life;
your portraits of mankind are undying;
your life is a spring eternal
for those who wallow
in the vulgar culture of today:
your poetry has an untrammelled flow:
even time cannot destroy it.

1 The celebrated Telugu poet Shri Vishwanath Satyanarayan.

अेक मोट्यार बणती उमर सूँ

अवै स्यात् तूँ (उमर)

उण बीड़ी पीवणियै

अर कदे-कदे

भायलां नार्गि सिगरेट ई पीवणियै

छोरां रा होठां अूपरां

‘रेखिया-उठाए’ वणनै आय रैयो है ।

अर छोरो रोजीनै

आपरो मूँडो दरपण माय

देख रैयो है ।

उण री बोली

घणी पाकगी है

अर सगल्है दिन

बी बणती मोट्यार

आपरी भरदानगी री

आपरै ‘प्रोक्टसन’ ‘प्रमोजन’ री

बानगी लगाय रैयो है

उग्हरी अकन उग आयो है

उगु रा होठां रै अूपरां ।

उण रा गोरा गालां अूपरां ।

TO A MAN IN THE MAKING

You (the spirit of youth) are coming softly
to this young boy,
who smokes bidis
and enjoys a few whiffs with friends,
in the shape of a hair-line on his lips.

This boy now looks at his face in the mirror daily.
His voice has become gruff.

This youth in-the-making
is now collecting signs of rising lustiness,
of his new 'profession', and sudden 'promotion' the

[whole day.

Wisdom has begun to grow
on his lips
and on his pink-coloured cheeks.

पलु मूँद्धयां शूपरां ताव देणो
गरव री वात नीं है ।
तूं उणनैं कैय देय—
यारै मन री 'तुगाई' नैं
कठै ई करडैपण रो दानो
कैद नीं कर लेवै,
कूँछी-कंवली साव री भोली
रीती नीं रैय जावै,
'तुगाई' नीं मर जावै ।

But merely twirling moustaches
is not a matter of pride.

Warn him
lest the sweet-heart of his dreams
be locked up in some fiendish hands,
and he is left, in the end,
empty-handed
moaning over his loss !

MADAN GOPAL SHARMA (b 1926) is on the faculty of Hindi department, Rajasthan University, Jaipur. He was born in Samod, Jaipur, in a middle class family. His mother, Smt. Rampyari Devi, is a well-known social worker and was also an MLA in the erstwhile Jaipur State Assembly. Mr. Sharma spent a few months, as a boy, at the Gandhi Ashram, Wardha. He did his M. A. (with distinction) from Rajasthan University and LL. B. from Delhi University.

For two years (1948-1949) he practised as a lawyer, and for the next two years (1950-1951) he served as Secretary, District Board, Sawai Madhopur, before beginning his career of teaching at Government College, Kishangarh.

His first publication of Rajasthani poems is *Gokhai Oobhi Gauradi* (1965). During the Tagore Centenary year he translated *Rabindra Padya Katha*, which was published by the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy. He also wrote the biography of Shri Hira Lal Shastri, the first Chief Minister of Rajasthan, entitled *Vanasthali Ka Vanprasthi*. A collection of his Hindi poems *Madhugandha* is in the press.

He lives at Ram Kutir, Gopalpura, Jaipur.

चिड़कोली

म्हारी नीमड़ली री डाळ जी
उड़ती आ बैठी चिड़कोली

मायै किलंगी पगल्यां मैंहदी
हिंगलू वरणी चांच
पांख सिन्दूरी रूप मुरंगो
देख्यो न सुणियो सांच
आ तो रचना एक कमाल जी, उड़ती...

नांव न जाणूँ गांव न जाणूँ
कुणसै जलम री प्रीत
चाणचुकी भा म्हारै आंगण
गावण लागी गीत,
जाणै इमरत वरसै डाळ जी, उड़ती...

म्हारै आंगण नीमड़ी जिण री
नस-नस कड़वो जहैर
कुंज कदम री वांसरी थे
उळझी कींकर कैर
थारी कांई करां मनवार जी, उड़ती...

ताव तपै लूवां चलै जी
सूख्या नंदी ताल
धोरा वगल्या धूळ रा
ग्रांठ भूंडी वहवै भाल
काची नींवोद्धी ही रसाल जी, उड़ती...

THE BIRD

A bird came down a-flying
perched on a branch of my neem tree,
a poem of wonder, neither heard nor seen,
hues vermillion, crimson, free.

I know not her name nor place
know not I our ties,
she came down and poured forth
a strain that never dies:

My neem is bitter as gall
you a warbler of meadows !

I know not how to greet you
here among trees as arrows.

Here, sunny summer licks up rivers n lakes
the wind raises dust n storm
I have no manna to offer you
but seeds of neem, raw n warm.

जाओ कोई हरियल वागां
वैठो ग्रांवै साख
फल-फूलां री सीढ़ी छायां
चाखो दाढ़म दाख
पाणी पीवो तरवर पाल जी, उड़ती...
के जाओ कोई बड़मागी रै
जो मिजमान्यां जोग
सोना रो मिन्दर चांदी रो पिन्जर
मूँगा मोती भोग
राखै पछकां री ओट सम्हाल जी, उड़ती...
ग्रांवै खुली, चिढ़कोली उड़गी
पड़ग्या खाइ-कूप
आ तो पहली प्रीतड़ली ही
चिढ़कोली रै रूप
दूटी ग्रांमूडां री माल जी, उड़ती...

Better fly to pastures green
and nibble at the fruit of your choice.
Why wait in a land so bitter n dry ?
Cool there and rejoice.

Or, go to one in his palace of gold
he'll rock you in a silver cage,
serve pearls and rubies to you to chew
and fondle you with love n care.

I woke. She leapt away plashless,
my first love in the form of a bird,
ties snapped, gulf widened,
tears came in abundance.

थारै अर म्हारै बीच

थारै अर म्हारै बीच
भीड़ रो वेदाग वोरंसी रेळो
मिनख सूं मिनख टकरातो
घणचकरी मोवन मेळो
समदर ज्यूं ल्हैरां लेतो
झकझोरतो, वांथ धालतो
कितणी ही दार आयो—
पण, उसांस नांख, रीता ही हाथां वावड़ग्यो
रीझ्यो नहीं मन
तन तकात भीज्यो नहीं ।

तूं अर मैं
काया नै पछेवडा ज्यूं
हाया मैं याम
द्याया वण
हाड़-मांस री ठोस ठसकोल्यां मांय सूं भी
सफा वेदाग निसरग्या ।

THE WEDGE

Many a time in our life
an unending tide of people
many-coloured, man colliding with man,
labyrinthine like a fair
undulating like the waves of seas
gripping, grappling,
came between you and me.

But it, wearied, eventually
went back, empty-handed :
our hearts were not touched by it,
our bodies absolutely undrenched.

You and I
holding our body in hand like a scarf
by changing ourselves into a shade
passed through many concrete mortal jokes
of flesh and bone
and went out of them unhurt, unsullied.

परण, आज
 जद तूं अर मैं
 वीं भवलका खाती ऊभ-चूभ सूं दूर
 आ वैद्या इं अरणभै इकन्त मैं
 दै डीगी अर अडिग वजरसिला ऊपर
 बीहड़ उजाड़ मैं
 जठे यारी म्हारी वाजती सांसां रा इकतारा नैं छोड़
 और कोई भी सुर नीं सुणीजै
 तो
 थारै अर म्हारै बीच
 चाणचुके ही
 श्रो कुण आ वैद्यो
 द्यितर्यो-द्यितर्यो
 एक द्यांवरो उणियारो
 अग्नचायो अलगाव रचतो
 एक ही सूरत मैं
 दो-दो चैरा-मोरा रो
 दोगलो दरसाव रचतो !
 म्हां दोन्यां मैं आंतरो घाल
 आप नेडो होतो
 तूं-तूं मैं-मैं री फूटकाकड़ी करा
 कड़वा बीज बोतो
 कुण रो है श्रो मायावी उणियारो
 म्हारै मावै यारो !
 अर
 थारै भावै म्हारो ! !

But today
when you and I
have come far off from the sparkling rut of life
and sit alone on this rugged, immovable rock
amid the wild woods
where nothing except the breath of our warm sighs is
[heard
how is it
that this strange-looking creature
has come unnoticed between us
creating a gulf ?
In one face it makes a full display
of the cunning of many handsome rogues !
It divides us, and itself takes root
and sows between us the seeds of separation.
I do not know what this phantom is
that cheats you in my name,
and me, in yours !

MANI MADHUKAR (b 1942) is the one poet known in and out of Rajasthan for his writings (mainly Hindi). His poems and short-stories have been translated into many languages including English and French. After his M.A. from Jaipur he has always been on the move, going from one profession to another and from one town to another. Both his life and writings are unorthodox and unconventional.

Mani Madhukar ('Madhukar' is his pen-name) is a literary journalist, novelist, playwright, and poet. His writings have the stamp of a personality : they have a vast sweep and compelling vigour in them. The National Sahitya Akademi conferred on him the poetry award for his first Rajasthani book *Pag Phero* in 1976. His first collection of poems in Hindi and Rajasthani appeared under the title *Sudhi Sapnon Ke Teer*. His other well-known books in Hindi are : *Safed Memna*, *Khand Khand Pakhand Parva*, *Ghas Ka Gharana*, *Patton Ki Biradari*, and *Ras Gandharva*.

दीठ

पांचूं ग्रांगल्लियां नैं

पुण्याचो भारी पडै

ग्राकास री सोंव वठै तांझ दुचै

जित्तो पंछी उडै

दीठ नैं दाय ग्रावै वो ई अपरव रूप

ग्रांह्यां री सराह सूं ई मिलै

सवदां नैं सांचो वखाण

श्रेकर ग्रीहूं दोरावणी चावूं म्है

कै असमान नैं सदां

अरथ देवै

पंतेस री उडाण !

VISION

The five fingers
are no match for a wrist.

The sky rises as far
as the bird can fly.

Beauty is that
which feasts the eye.
Words get their stature
if admired by the eyes.

I want to tell you again
that the flight of the bird
gives meaning to the sky.

अचाणचक

मायकोव्हसकी री
कवितावां वांचतां नै
यांनैं सुणावतां
अचाणचक म्हें श्रेकदम सुन्नो
पड़ग्यो

एक द्विण सातर
दीठ री श्रदीठ अंधारी गुफा
सूं जाणै कुण
वारै नीसर्यो अर पाढ्यो
म्हारै मांय वड़ग्यो !

AN EXPERIENCE

Reading the poems
of Mayakovsky to myself
and reading them for you
I, of a sudden, stood
stunned.

In a moment
some unknown spirit ran out
from the deep dark cave of my vision
and went back into me !

वियैतनाम : सात सलाम !

कितरा ईज साल बीतग्या
पण
कोई मार्ड रो लाल
थारै पड़कोटै में
तिरेड नीं घाल सक्यो

घनपतियां रो गुमेज
रळग्यो माटी में नै
दुनिया री आजादी रा डाकी डकरेल
थारी चिटली आंगली सूं
पंजो लड़ावण री
कोसीस करनै मांदा पड़ग्या

थारी मगती थारै दूकियां में
थानै किण री परवा
बमा रे गोल्डा तल्लै व्याव-वान
मुक्कावै रा नेग-तेग
सेती नै खला
कारवाने री चिमनी रो चै'कारो
टावरियां री भणाई
फौज-फांटो नै दुस्मण रा दांतड़ा
तोड़ण री त्यारी

THREE CHEERS FOR VIETNAM

Many years have passed
but no son of man
could make a single breach
in your fort.

The arrogance of the rich licked the dust before you,
the ghoulish champions of world freedom
strode to measure their strength
against your wee finger
and they too, finally, turned pale.

Your strength lies in your muscles:
Who do you care ?
Amidst heavy bombing
your women gave birth to children
and the newly-weds went undeterred to their new homes.
You kept your factories in motion.
You cared for the education of your children
and prepared your army too
for knocking down the wicked enemy.

इतियात में यारै जेडो कोई
दूजो द्रिस्टांत नीं
जूँकाहू जोत रो अवै
अेक ई नांव...विद्यतनाम !

जैसाएँ नै वीकाएँ रै
विदावान जमीं-खंड़ सूं
भेजूं
म्हैं थानैं
सात सलाम !

History does not supply
a match for you.

Now the name for a fighting candle is
VIETNAM.

I send you, O Vietnam,
from this arid tract of Jaisalmer and Bikaner
my seven salaams !

आखतो

काजीपेठ रा डाक बंगला
में थ्रेक कमरो
साम्हों वालवनी
अर वो वीं री डोली सारै थ्रूभो
थडीजन्त !

चैरा चैरा चैरा ई चैरा
नै वां रै थ्रूपरांकर
उडती वाफ

कोई वीं री जिदगी में सामल कोती
न न्यारो
वो किण नै तजे किण नै भजै
सैवा अणसैवा लार्ग
अणसैवा सैवा
अर वीं नै न मिलण रो चाव
नीं अणजाणगी रो पद्धतावो
पण कदे-कदास खुद रै माथै थोड़ी
भूंझ्ल थावै
वयूकै वो मोका-वेमीका ठोड़-कुठीड़
आपरो नांव भून ज्यावै

IN A HURRY

A room in a dak bungalow at Kazipeth.
In front a balcony.
There he stands alone against the parapet wall.

Faces, faces, faces all around.
Over them hangs a hazy mist.

There is none close to him
there is none far from him,
who should he give up
and who should he not ?—
the familiar looks unfamiliar
and the unfamiliar familiar,
he does not wish to meet anybody
nor does he have any regret for not meeting anybody,
but occasionally he quarrels with himself
for, he forgets his own name
at some unwanted place and time.

वो चावै के किणी
 देस-दिसावर मैं
 श्रेक चैरो श्रैडो हुवै जिण नै
 सिरफ वो ई देखै
 श्रेक अकास श्रैडो हुवै जिणा मैं
 सिरफ वो ई आपरा नखत कोर सकै
 श्रेक सबद श्रैडो हुवै जिणा नै
 सिरफ वो ई कंवल के चकमक री ज्यू भाल सकै
 एक कथण श्रैडो हुवै जिणा नै
 सिरफ वो ई के सकै !

अलेनूं सल्लवटां
 नै इठतर वरसां री जूती कामळ
 श्रोड'र ऊमो वो डोकरो !
 अवै वो न रितुवां नै उडीकै
 नौं आगला-पाद्धता दिना रा भूगडा चावै
 श्रेकलो आङ्गतो हुय ज्यावै तो वीयर पीवै
 खाली बोतल उद्याढ देवै ऊपर
 नै आँख्या मींच
 वों रे दूटण री अवाज सुणे !

He wishes
that there should be a face in some land
which he alone can love,
there should be a space
where he alone can etch out his dreams,
there should be a word
which he alone can strike like a splint,
there should be a statement
which he alone can utter !

Wrapped in an old blanket
and in endless wrinkles
stands this old man of seventy-eight !
Now he neither invites the happy seasons
nor recollects the bygone days.
When time hangs heavy on him
he drinks beer
and throws the empty bottle up in the air
and listens unerringly to its cracking sound !

NAND BHARADWAJ (b 1948), one of the most talented young poets of Rajasthani, was born in the village Madpura in Badmer. Educated at Rajasthan University, Jaipur, Mr Bharadwaj worked as research scholar in Delhi before he joined the All India Radio, Jodhpur. His stay at Jaipur seems to have been extremely fruitful as it brought him in touch with the new ideas and literatures of Europe.

During his short span of literary activity, he reviewed books, composed poems, wrote stories and critical essays, edited literary journals and political magazines, and translated books. (He translated *Le Stranger* by Camus into Rajasthani.)

In 1974 he produced his first book of poems, *Andhar Pakh*, which secured the first prize awarded by the Rajasthan Graduates National Service Association, Bombay. At present he is the Programme Executive, AIR, Jodhpur.

अंधार-पञ्च

मुनसान अंधारे में
 झूँच्योड़ा दरमत
 घोरां रा जूय
 श्रूमा है मून
 निरजण उजाड़ में
 आमे री गिरद में
 अंग्यां भपकातो चितवगनो
 धू-तारो
 उमो है जाणौ कित्ता इ वरसां सूं
 भाठे री जीवंत-पूतली सो

अर हारधोड़ा मारग
 सूता है खूंटी ताण-
 सांसां फेरतो रैवै पसवाड़ा आँखी रात,
 अर किणी ग्रणचेत पुळ में
 श्रेक अणवूभ धूं घल्को
 श्रेवट मन्व लेवै किणी दाल
 तप जावै हर-श्रेक अणूं ताइ-जुल म
 अंधार-पञ्च री
 अदीठ काली पुड़तां में !

THE DARK FORTNIGHT

The trees stand sunk deep in darkness,
the clusters of dunes lie speechless in the desolate land,
the pole-star winks from the distant lap of the sky :
it has stood there for centuries
like a living puppet in stone.

The pathways lie wearily, fast asleep,
the westerly wind runs about the whole night,
and in a moment, without guard
a hazy light, at the end, flashes across,
and then
all atrocities hide themselves
beneath the unseen layers of the dark fortnight.

जद ई किएरी
उरावणे जंजाल वर्जे
नुल जावै मांभत्त रात में म्हारी ग्रांख
ओ ई दीठाव पसर जावै म्हारी दीठ मै
ओ ई चिरधिर सरणाटो
भरीज्योडी लावै च्याहूं कूंटां में
घोरा डाकतो !

ਮਹੈਂ ਨਿਕਲ ਜਾਵੁੰ
 ਗਾਂਵ ਰੀ ਗਲਿਆਂ ਪਾਰ
 ਉਣ ਸੂਝਹੋਡੇ ਕੁਝੇ ਕਾਨੀ
 ਜਿਣ ਨੇਂ ਅਥ ਕੋਨੀ ਵਤਲਾਵੈ
 ਨੀਂ ਗਿਨਾਰ ਰਾਵੈ
 ਸਾ'ਰੈ-ਕਰ ਨੌਸਰਤਾਂ

पण महने हाल भी लगाव है
 इण त्याज्योऽु कुर्य मू उत्तो ई गेरो
 अर गाढो-
 धंटा लग वैठो रेवू
 इण रा फूट्योऽा सेळ्हो-कोठां माथे
 केई वार
 अर मेमूसतो रेवू इण रो दरद
 माय ई माय

Whenever my eyes open
in the midst of a frightening dream,
this very silence, motionless, hung
on all sides to the distant dunes.

I then set out of my village
towards that waterless well :
none speaks to it now
people pass by it without a word,
without a glance.

But my love is undiminished still
for this divorced well.
For long hours I sit on its broken edges
and suffer its privations inwardly.

—कठै गदा ग्रां ऊजड़्यै घरों में
रैवगियां सगळा लोग :

म्हें चागुचक पूद्य लेवूं कुम्है मूं
अर पड़ूतर में
घणी जेज तांड़ गूंजता रैवै
तळ री अंधारी
बुमावदार गैराई में म्हारा ई सवद
म्हें भूल जावूं खुद रो आपो;
द्वळती रात रो बोध

अर इणी मनगत में
जद निजर पड़ जावै
अणकेम में गांव माथै—
म्हत्तै जागौं वयूं
मेसूस हुवण लार्न कै ओ गांव
हाल भी सागण ठोड़
विना किणी दुराव
पिद्धतावै
कल्हीज्यां वैठो हैं

गुमसुम
दुनिया री नेज रपतार
अर जीवगु रै सही ढंग मूं अणजाण
साव परवार पळती
तारा द्यावै आनै नीचै
ग्रेक द्वित्योड़े काळ-संड री भांत

I ask the well :
where have they gone
who lived in these shattered homes ?
These words, for quite long, travel
in the dark winding depth of the well,
and I, lost in myself, become unconscious
of the waning night.

If perchance I look back at the village
I wonder how it lies dumb still,
without any regret, unaware
of the speed of the modern world
and the pattern of new living :
a poor souvenir of Time
left behind under the starry sky !

अंधारे री
 हरेक अनीताई नै
 करतो कवूल
 किएगी अदीठ सगती रो
 मानतो छेलो आदेस
 चो कोनी उठा पायो कदेई
 वेद्माफी रे वरखिलाफ
 कोई आवाज
 अेकल या अेकठ रूप में

केहं भी जाएँ वयूं
 म्हैं नीं विसार टाल सकूं
 इण ईर्योड़े काल-न्वंड
 इण फाल-चूक हुयोड़े आदमी नै
 चुद री जात्रा रे दोरान
 फिरतो-फिरतो केहं आ पूँगू
 पाल्दो इणी गुवाड़ में,
 अर भूल जावूं
 सुद रे घावां री पीड़
 हदां पूर्योड़ी पीड़ री हालत देखतां

It defied no deed of darkness
rather, took it for the last command of some unseen
[power,
and hence never raised its voice
against injustice,
alone or unitedly.

Still
I could not dismiss from memory
(though try I did,)
this unmoving souvenir of Time
this strayed person ! I come back
to the village, and seeing
the large-sized pain there around
my own full-blown pain turns pale.

गैलीजण लागूं
 इण गांव री निरमळ गोद में
 अर घिर जावूं डग्गी भांत
 फेर किणी उजाइ-जंजाळ मैं-
 होछै-होछै पगां नीचै मूं
 सिरकण लागै काठी घन्ती
 ताळ्वै चिप जावै म्हारी जुवान,
 भागण री कोसीस मैं
 गोडां तांडी कळीज जावै पग
 वेकळू रेत मैं

अंदारै मैं केइ अणजाण उणियारा
 हायां मैं लियां आदम-जुग रा ओजार
 म्हारै नैडा आवण लागै
 म्हारी मीट गडायां म्हारी मीट नै
 अर देवतां-देवतां
 सारै कर निसर जावै आगै
 म्हारै काना मैं
 की घमकी-नर्या सबद राळता
 वै अलोप हुय जावै
 श्रेकाश्रेक अंदारी गळियां मैं

I look a perfect mad-cap
in the unsoiled lap of this village,
and like it, get lost in some quixotic schemes.
The solid earth begins to slip softly beneath my feet,
the tongue gets stuck to the palate,
and in an effort to whisk away
my legs sink knee-deep in the stoic sands.

In darkness
many unfamiliar faces with jagged tools in their hands
come closer to me, fix their angry gaze into my eyes,
and staring go ahead of me.
They pour dire threats into my ears
and vanish in the maze of dark lanes.

श्रेक फुरतीली भिक्कक समचै
 मुल जावै मांभक्क रात में म्हारी आंख
 आनाचूरु उठ वैदूं मांचै माथै
 श्रर देवण लागूं—
 अंघारै मैं नीमडै री हालती डाळ्यां
 अपमणी टीकोळ्यां भूंपडां री,
 पण तद ताई
 विवर जावै सगळो आळ-जंजाळ
 श्रर आमै मैं तारा दांत काढण लागै !
 महैं फिरोळ्यतो रैवूं
 गळियां आळ्यी रात
 वैठो रैवूं घटां लग
 वां नेळी-कोठां री उणींदी मींतां माथै
 वां यूंचार इरादा रो
 गैलो उडीकतो !

श्रर इणी विचाळै
 केहूं श्रेक दिन ऊगण रो भरम लियां
 चालू हूवै घाणी :
 भाय फाटण सूं पैली
 गाढा पूरण व्यातर
 उठ जावै ओ गोव
 जांभरकै पैली
 घृमण लागै घट्टी रो पाट
 चून्हां सूं उठण लागै घूंश्रो

Shaken, I sit up on my cot at midnight,
see the dithering branches of the neem tree
and the faint clusters of the huts,
but by then
the dream thins out
and the stars begin to titter at me !

I wander through the lanes the whole night,
sit for hours on the drowsy edges of streams seeking
the way to that barbarous dream.

Then amidst this,
under the illusion of the new dawn
the same old wheel rattles again :
the village is up before the sun-break
to fill up the pits,
the quern moves
before the temple-bell rings,
the smoke begins to rise from hearths.

उद्धर आवे आल्स मरोडता
 वाडां घरां सूं जीव-जिनावर
 मिनख
 चरणोई री खोज में
 चकरी चढ्या धूमता रेवे
 आवे दिन-वरस-ता श्रूमर
 इणी उजाड में
 सिम-या घिरणा साथे ई
 आमे में श्वलोप हुय जावे
 सगळी उम्मीदां

फेर वो ई उजाड़
 वो ई विरतो अंघारो
 चौकेर सालरतो सरगाटो वेयाग
 आठूं पीर आंख्यां आगे
 लेवडां रो छेर
 नागी-तेड़ां खायोड़ी-भीतां
 अर जूनी बाड़ रे दोल्क-कर
 जमती वेकल्दू री पुहतां-
 छेवट कायो कर
 होवणहार रे हाथां मूँप देवे आदमी नै-

the yards go empty twisting idleness,
men and animals go out together
in search of grazing fields,
they go round and round the same wasteland
the whole day
the whole year
the whole life !

And with the darkfall
all hopes vanish into the thin air.
Again, the same poker-faced wild,
the same entombing darkness,
the same vast, dreadful silence.
At all hours
nothing but the peeled-off layers of houses,
the bare, fissure-ridden walls,
the rising layers of sand around old enclosures :
all this in the end surrenders man to providence.

आज भी म्हारा कानां में गूंजै
उण आंगरौ रे अधविचालै
दुसक्या भरती बैठी
जमनां री मांदी आवाज़ :

(हीये री हाहाकार)

‘इण गांव में
नीं खावण नैं जैर है
नीं म्हारी खैर
किण रे भरोसै जलम देवूं
इण पापी पेट में बघतै
नूंचै दुरभाग नैं ?’

खुद री आवरू
अर लोक-लाज री छोड़ गिनार
बघतै ओजरै नैं सूनी आंख्यां मैं उतार
वा उण छेनी रात घिरतै अंधारै मैं
फेण अेकर हळवीं-सी मुळकी
अर होळै-होळै
अेक अकथ उदासी मैं डूबगी
नीं बापरी पाढ़ी ओप उण रे उजियारै,

Even today the ailing voice of Jamuna
crying hysterically in the centre of her wretched home
rings in my ears, (her agony brimful) :
“This accursed village
doesn’t have even poison to give.
I am doomed here !
For which manly hand
should I deliver this new growing misfortune
in my belly ?”

She brushed aside her social graces
and conventions and her own prestige,
engulfed the growing womb in her vacant eyes.
In the gathering darkness that night,
she gave a faint smile
and quietly sank into deep despair.
She never returned to that old winsome light.

कांडे हवान हूँवैला इगु जांमण में
 जामण री औलाद में;
 इगु उधेडवुण में
 म्हें सोधण निकछ्यो श्रेक रात
 इण री भरतार
 कोसां फैल्योडे नूने उजाड में
 अर उद्भवतो रेयो आयै-दिन
 लगूलग
 अलेखूं गांवां-सैरा
 गठियां री
 नित-नूंवीं अवन्वायां में !

जागतां-बूझतां सातर अणजांण
 वष्योडो देखतो रेयो
 इगु अंधार-पत्र रो तमाम कारोबार
 अर मांय-ई-मांय
 करतो रेयो नुद नैं तैयार
 उण देनैं संग्राम साल ।

What does it communicate, this child-birth ?
It's bound to be difficult for both
mother and child !
Lost in it I set out that night in the vast immeasurable
[darkness ;

I combed each village, city,
their lanes, bylanes
with unbroken continuity.

Knowingly I put on a mask
to see the full-length drama of this dark fortnight
and mustered up myself inwardly
for the last pitched battle.

NARAIN SINGH BHATI (b 1930), Director, Rajasthani Sodh Sansthan, Chopasani, Jodhpur, ranks among the major figures of Rajasthani poetry. His contribution to Rajasthani poetry has been immense. *Oulum*, *Sanjh*, *Meghdoot*, *Durgadas*, *Jeevan-dhan*, *Paramveer*, *Kalap*, and *Miran* have all gone into the making of modern Rajasthani literature.

Mr Bhati was born in Maloongo, Jodhpur. Besides being a poet, he is also a researcher and edits *Parampare*, a research journal. He earned his Ph. D. degree by working on 'Dingal Geet'. His contribution to poetry was duly acknowledged by the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy and the Rajasthani Graduates Association of Bombay. His book 'Miran' has won the highest award of poetry from Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy.

मोरां

अरे ग्रो कितरो ग्रजूवो अनुभव है
 इण मेरावां नीचै—
 गुद्योडी काळ-वावडियां री पावडियां
 औक सलूणी र्यान रे नेठाव सायै
 उतरणो,
 अर भीरी पाली री ऊंडी ढोव मैं
 भाँकणो,
 जठै ऊवतै अंधारे रे अमलाक हेठै
 पैली वार
 म्हारी नैण-जोत सूं
 वै मरमीला आईठाण
 सोनजुही ज्यूं चमकण लागा ।

अर किणी रोमांचियै चित्रपट नै
 देव्यों—
 आज रे उजास कानी
 उण जुग री गवरल विणिहारियां सागै
 पाद्यो पांचसो पावडियां
 चढणो ।

× × ×

MIRAN

It is a splendid experience to look below
the debris of history,
to climb down a flight of stairs of a tank
with faith and certitude
and look deep into its unmoving water
and find beneath its sluggish layers
those mystery chambers
which, to my extended vision,
begin to shimmer like golden fish.

To climb up those five hundred steps
with the comely maidens of that city
towards the neon-light
is like to see a movie
wreathed in romance.

X

Y

पण इण इतिहास रे उफाण री निकेवळी आव
मुगल मरेठां मोरां
गरणावती गिरद द्यण
आज श्रसेस है
मीरां रे मिदर री श्रेक परकमा मैं,
जिग्ग खातर वै काळ-देवळ रा कळस
हमें मगसा लागै
अर वो सागड़दो मंगीत
मीरां रे पगां रे गूंधरियां मैं आय
नचीतो होग्यो ।

× × ×

राणाजी जाण्यो नहीं
उण आतम रो उद्याव
भजन करतोही मीरां
चांनैं माई नहीं ।
'ओ ना राज-राणियां रो दस्तूर-
देजावतै मिदर मैं उठ वैठणो,
आखी-आखी रेगा
मैंलां मैं गूंधरां री घमरोळ
सावू संतां रे मणांवंध
नित रा तुलणा पेटिया ।'

× × ×

The uncommon nimbus earned through the tide of
[history stays :
that effulgence made its way successfully
through the clouds of dust
kicked up by the Moghuls, the Marahattas, the English.
It is still alive in the precincts of Miran's temple;
it's on that score the gold-studded tops of the Mahakaal's
[temple

look so puny before hers.

The rhythm of the world fades
where is heard the music of her feet.

X X X

Ranaji couldn't measure
the height of her soul :
the devotional Miran
didn't please his tiny soul.

He said to himself :

This doesn't become a queen.
This going to temple at odd hours
without a trace of protocol !
This conversion of the palace
into a dancing hall at night;
this open-handed offering of doles
to mendicants and saints :
this doesn't become a queen.

X X X

राणा भूल्यो-

मोताहळ सिखरां सूं मोटी
पावासर परोटणी नार रो
हेमाळ हियो

देवट

नार रे हिये रो चिर साल
जनानै अरथ लागो

राणो वींभरियो-

मेटे मेडतणी कुळ री काण
नजनी अपसुगनी लागे
राजभूवन मैं ।'

मिजळी मिसलत रे पाण

विसहर अटकळियां

विस प्यालो पठायो

देवण मै'लां री मोत रो

देव्लो सनमान

वा कर ले चरणाम्रत चितारती

मरदां री मरदानगी री

अलिक्षी द्यात नै

मुळक री मठोठ सूं फरोळती

जाण्यो-

Rana couldn't fathom her heart
that embraced the Mansarovar in itself,
that was more precious than a heap of pearls,
that was as big as the Himalayas.

Stung by her indifference
he felt very low, and this, in the end,
made his hackles up :
'She has tarnished the fair name of Medata¹.
A devotional singer's presence is an ill omen
in a royal palace'.

The meanest voice prevailed.
A cobra was brought in and
a cup of poison made
to pay her the last honours
of the palace.

She took the cup for a heavenly drink
and gave an ironic smile
that tweaked the pride of man
in history yet to be written
and said :

'सीता नै सावित्री रा गोत में
 म्हारी सह्य प्रात्मा रा
 अण्ठंत रूपक सूं
 इण्ठ प्यालै रो ओ सोदो सीसोद ?'
 उण्ठ डग डग कंठ
 हंसी हेठ हळाहळ डकारियो ।

सिज्या रै सिव-कंठां ओट
 सैचरती रैगु
 दीवाघरी दामण में
 खोलिया नैण,
 घुळतां-घुळतां
 बतरस वैण,
 अंतेवर अंतराळां मेज सळवळियां
 गैळीजियै राणी नैं आयो आळ जंजाळ-
 तुला पडिया मेडतणी रा मै'ल
 पावडियां पथरीजिया मखमल थान
 सिव भरणै करतोड़ी सिनान
 घोळा तो धरिया है
 पापळ-डाळ
 उण गड सूं उतरती
 भगवां दैरिया ।

'Many a time my soul
had come in the guise of
Sita and Savitri.
This bargain too, O Sisod², is not bad.'
Unperplexed, she drank the poison
in big gulps.

With darkfall
came the lamp-lighter
and she lit the lamps;
the women sat aroud
and chatted a great deal
love beating in their hearts. Later they went away.
The Rana too with sleep-heavy eyes
retired to bed. He had a dream :
The doors of Miran's palace are lying wide open,
the stairs are covered with velvet
and Miran is bathing at the Siva fountain.
She leaves her white garments on the branch of a peepal
puts on saffron-coloured clothes
and descends from the fort.

पीवर रा भूपणां री पेई खोल
 चा वांटती जावै है शूभै मग
 सोळै मिणागार रा सराजाम
 कोई मिदर सू निकळतो
 वांटै जाणै सीरणी,
 (राणै रो नुपन पण मीरां रै मतवाळै मग रो सांच)

सवद युलै उण पेल
 वंवियो सरणाटो
 गाडै गाड,
 घिर पलकां
 रथ रज घिरकतां
 मीरां मुणियां-
 जोजरै कंठ रा
 श्रादा-डोळा वोल,
 करी वत्त्वावण
 मुगतकेसी कुंवराणी सीधै वोल में-
 'मोडा ग्राया रै मानीता सरदार !
 चा वेळा तो कदे वीतगी,
 म्हारी सार मुरच्छा रो
 कांडे वतावो मूळाळां मोद
 मीरां तो मार लिया
 जग द्यळ मीर
 अै अमीर भलांडे भवो
 किरण रो कांडे करले कांवळा ।'

× × ×

On the way
she opens her jewellery box
given to her in dowry
and gives out each ornament of her bridal make-up
like a devotee, outside a temple
doling out alms, without any favour,
to passers by.

Wonder of wonders !
Miran did what the Rana was dreaming.

X

X

There was silence all around.
Silence deepened.
With her eyes motionless
she heard the rumbling of chariots
and also heard
the gruff voice of the coming lords.
The daughter-in-law of Mewar, with her tossing hair
unabashedly told them :
'My Honour ! You are late.
The die is cast.
O whisker-proud brave men !
Why talk of my safety ?
Already, Miran has conquered the swindlers of the world.
Let the Moghul officers move about
and do what they like.
The vultures cannot stop the coming light.'

X

X

‘कहजो राणाजी नै
सावछ संभाल राखै
मता नै भेवाइ,
कांड है कवै रै कांसा रो
भेलो मोह ?
हैं तो मिदर-मिदर
मूरत संवार
कर लेमू प्राण पालणा ।’

× × ×

मन गमगीन गई
रयान मवद रो चाह
'नारी तू मिलै नहीं गोस्वामी जीव'
आ गुणता ही उचटियो जीव-
'कुण नर कुण नार
कुण ऊन कुण नीच
कुण मिढ़ कुण सिढ़ि
इग विश्व कुंज में
रमे
ओक भाण
किरण आतमा ।'

‘Tell Ranaji
he should guard his wealth and his Mewar well.
What’s there
in making a stable supply of food ?
Me ? I shall move
from temple to temple
serving My Lord,
and keep myself alive.’

X X X

In search of Truth and Wisdom
she roamed about and once heard :
‘Jiva Gowsami doesen’t meet woman’.
This made her cheerless, and she blurted :
‘Who is man, who is woman ?
Who is high, who is low ?
Who is perfect, who is not ?
Who is the means, who, the end ?
One common ray of the Sun
runs through the bower of this universe.

मोटोड़ा मठां री जाएँी जाण, जिसो ही दियो जवाव
'यारा श्रापाण में पिदाएँ
म्हे तो पंथ वाळी पीड़—

'अरै वंट रा लोभी लैणायतां !
घरा नै धींगाएँ वांटी भूपतियां
घन नै सूंत लियो घनपतियां
घरम नै पंथ में पल्लीट
थे नर नै नारायण वांटियो ।'

अरै मठां री मठोठ करणियां
म्हे तो पाड़िया गडां रा कांगरा
म्हे तो छोड़ी सिहां री मांद
इण माळां में हमें कांडे झांकणो,
थे गूऱु गुमेज सूं संवारो हो नीड
वारै आवो तो वंटे घरतो री पीड़ ।

× × ×

In no time she knew about the big monasteries
and knew what they were
and gave a fitting reply :

‘I have understood your philosophy of brotherhood.
(Mine is the path of suffering.)

‘The kings divided the world
the affluent swept the riches of the world.
And you greedy money-bags, dividers !
you, encasing Dharma into a sect,
have divided Narayana too
for human beings.’

‘O, you wanton masters of monasteries !
I have left the stranglehold of castles.
I have left the lairs of lions.
Why should I, again, peep into these tiny places ?
Owls are the janitors of your nests.
Come out
and share the sovereign pain
that is in the world.

X X X

श्रेवट

हायां री मुरली हिय लाय
 हांहनी कल्यो—
 'रे हठी कान्हा, बोल
 महारो हियो भंवारा खावै
 जूनी जमना रे पाट में,
 म्हें दण मुरली खातर
 वण उँ तोड़ी ऊनै रणवासां री कार
 ताँगै उँ तोड़ा या नुगणी सामू रा ओळभा
 जुग-जुग रा कामण कियोड़ा कांकण तोड़
 तोड़ी अटाणी सांसां री जंतर डोरड़ी,
 के-के तिरिया अजूभा भैराण
 वारा अणियाढा नैणां री पोई माछली,
 एक तान मूँ भरदे प्राणां में लीला प्राण
 जिण सूँ मिनख जमारो हुवै मोवनो ।

'थूं तो एकमण लेवण न्हाटो
 लांवठी फोज चढाय
 हूं तो लघण करतोड़ी डूगर लांध
 वारे कारण आई शेकली
 तो ही रुठे तूं स्याम
 हमें हूं रुठी तो
 जग नातो तांतो दूटसी'

At last
keeping the flute of Krishna close to her heart
breathlessly she said:
'Break your silence, my obstinate Kanha³.
My heart is tossing in the swirling stream of the old
[Jamuna.
For the sake of this flute
I broke off, like a straw, all the loops of the palace,
I snapped, like a thread, all the plaints of my good
[mother-in-law.

I wrote off all the magic bonds of my wedding
and shook off the ties of my mortgaged life.
You do not know
how in loving you, this maddened fish
has crossed the unknown seas.
Fill my soul, Lord, with your sweet music
give my drooping nerves an added thrill
and make my life worthy of living.

'To fetch Rukmani
you went with a big force
but I have myself come for you
crossing high hills, hungry, all alone.
Still, you are unshaken.
If I show my temper once, bear with me,
all ties of the world will come to an end.'

1 Miran's parental home.

2 Address to the king.

3 A name for Lord Krishna.

PARAS ARORA (b 1937), a compositor by profession, is an industrious composer of poems. He was born at Ajmer on the day of Rakshabandhan. His education, by formal standards, was very meagre. But he has made up for this shortcoming by learning other languages and literatures.

His inclusion among the five poets of *Rajasthani EK* brought him to limelight. Later, his book *Jhal* placed him among the front-ranking poets. For sometime he edited *Janakari* and *Deeth*.

His prose works include *Khulti Ganthan* (1978). His translation of an American novel is complete and will come out soon in print.

His address : Mehta Bhawan
Kabootaran Ro Chowk
Jodhpur

हिसाव

ओक शेठ
दुकान में बैठ्यो
गिरणे रिपिया
अर हिसाव लगावे
दिन भर री कमाई रो

ओक निरभागण
रसोई में बैठी
गिरणे पोयोही रोटियां
फेरे
आटे रे याती पीपे में हाथ
अर हिसाव लगावे
कड़वे री भूख रो ।

ACCOUNTS.

A big businessman
in his shop
checks up his sales proceeds
and works out
the day's profit.

An unfortunate woman
sitting in her kitchen
counts the baked chapatis,
checks up moving her hand in the empty flour-drum
and works out the details
of the starving family.

नुवों रूप

म्हारा से सपना बदल्या
कानां सुणीजता सुर बदल्या
अंतस री बदली आत्मा
भावना नुवें रूप प्रगटी-

जूनो बदल्यो पान-पान
कूंपलां नुवीं निकलगी ।

म्हारा सपना-
आभै मैं उडणो छोड़
जमीं री गळियां ढोलै ।

कानां मैं-
मिदर री घंट्यां ठोड़
मिलां रा नोंपू बोलै ।

विकी भावना-
परसेवां री तूंदां बदलै,
अंतस मैं जलमी
नुवीं आत्मा आंख्यां खोलै ।

THE AWAKENING

All dreams : changed.
All that I had heard : changed.
The soul of my self : changed,
and hence
the emotions took up a new shape.

All that was old
was burnt to ashes,
the new leaves sprouted everywhere.

My dreams
used to sky-roaming
are happy in the bylanes of the earth.

My ears
used to temple bells
now enjoy the siren hoots.

My feelings
are replaced by harsh realities :
the sweat of the eyebrow is wiped off.
A new-born soul opens its eyes within.

ਕਥੂਂ ਅਰ ਕਿਣ ਰੈ ਸਾਰੁ

ਕੇਈ-ਕੇਈ ਵਾਰ
ਪਿਰਥੀ ਰੀ ਪਰਕਮਾ ਕਰਣਾਛਾ
ਦੋਧ ਪਗ
—ਵੈਸਾਲਿਆਂ ਰੈ ਸਾ'ਰੈ ਕਥੂਂ ?

ਅਨੇਕਾਨੇਕ
ਵਜ਼ਾਦਾਤ ਭੇਲਣਾਛੀ
ਅੇਕ ਸੀਨੀ
—ਕਥੂਂ ਤਣਮੈ
ਹਿੜਦੈ ਰੋ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਰੋਪਣ ?

ਅੰਧਾਰੇ ਮੈਂ ਈ
ਮੀਨਾਂ ਸਫੀਟ ਦੇਖਣਾਛੀ
ਦੋਧ ਆਂਧੀਆਂ
—ਕਥੂਂ ਵਾਰੀ ਪਾਸਾਗੀ ਧਿਰਤਾ ?

WHY AND WHAT FOR

The two legs
that have gone round the globe
many a time
—why do they need crutches now ?

The breast
that has braved
many an onslaught
—what for in it this transplantaion of heart ?

The two eyes
that can see through darkness
for miles and miles
—why have they turned stone-blind ?

आवता जुगां री
समस्नावां रो समावान लियोडी
ओक 'मेकेनाइज्ड' सोपडी
—दयूं हिसाव नीं लगाय सकी
चुद री जिदगानी रो ?

दयूं ओक रघुकुली
ऊनो है भुज्योडो
जगे-जगे सूं दूटयोडो-तिड्यव्य'डो
जमानो
नीं जाएँ किण री स्वतंत्रता साढ
निरंतर
कर रेयो है संग्राम ?

The 'mechanized' brain
that promises solutions
of the coming times,
—why can't it calculate its own span of life ?

Why does he
the high-born, stand bent and broken ?
Does not the world know
whose freedom
he is struggling for ?

RAGHURAJ SINGH HADA(b 1928), one of the top-ranking poets of the Hadoti region, was born in Chamalasa, Jhalawar. He spent most of his life close to cottages and fields. As a teacher in various government schools of the region, he had the opportunity of living with and understanding the problems of the simple folk. His poetry, on that score, reflects the flavour and colour of the Chambal countryside. His *Phool Kesoola Phool*, published by the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy, documents this interest very well.

His other major works in Hindi and Rajasthani are : *Ghooghara* (Raj.), *Anabanchya Akhar* (Raj.), *Gaurav Rajasthan* (Hindi), *Bolte Pathar* (Hindi).

कतनी बार मरुं ?

कतनी बार मरुं, मूँ कतनी बार मरुं ?
उगता सूरज ज्यूं उठ, पाद्यो कतनी बार गरुं ?

जद जनमूं जद वाही, पीड़ा
वै का वै नरकां का कीड़ा
जही ढोवो बोझ दिनां को, कुण वै भार घरुं ?
मूँ कतनी बार मरुं ?

या चोमेरुं फीकी हांसी,
भूंठा, ग्रपणापण की फांसी,
सैं संभूया चमनी को बुझवो, कतनी बार डरुं ?
मूँ कतनी बार मरुं ?

दोडा-दोड मचाता सा'वा,
मंदरा-मंदरा तपता शा'वा,
काचो मटकी बेच ठगोरी, कतनी बार करुं ?
मूँ कतनी बार मरुं ?

SHALL I DIE AGAIN AND AGAIN ?

Shall I die again and again ?
Like the sun I rise.
Shall I set too like him again and again ?

Each time I am born, I see the same foul pain,
the same vermin of hell;
if each time I have to bear the burden of days
on whom shall I place this pannier of pain ?
Shall I die again and again ?

All around there is a wan smile,
relations : a well-woven net of wiles,
each evening, without fail, the lamp dies;
but, shall I fear it again and again ?
Shall I die again and again ?

There is a great fuss of weddings all around
the kilns are warming up in each round;
shall I sell off the pots half-baked and sell my soul too ?
But, shall I do it again and again ?
Shall I die again and again ?

कतना दन और

कतना दन और अस्थां ? कतना दन और ?

ताजां का ताजमहल ये भीतां रेत की,
ब्यालू की बेरां कोरी बातां मेत की,
यो नटबो बेवस—

ये खाटा और अधपाक्या घोर ! कतना दन और ?

हाँडी पै जाला घूं पूरै दै माकड़्यां
चूल्हा की पाती मैं घूं देती लाकड़्यां,
भूता ही बैठया रे’
भोजा टावर मूँडा घो’र—कतना दन और ?

पातालां पागी की ग्राड़ी भुक भाँकबो,
मिठबोला मेघां को डूंगरिया डाकबो,
भाटो ज्यूं को ज्यूं—
पण घसगी या उमर की डोर ! कतना दन और ?

HOW LONG

How long will you be like this,
how long, dear ?

This Taj Mahal of cards stands on infirm sands.
Your empty talks of golden harvest at the evening meals,
your desprate 'noes' to kids,
your green, unripe fruits.
But how long ?

Why do the spiders weave around your kitchen pots ?
Why the smoky firewood in your hearths ?
And why do your children starve
and cry for a crumb of bread ?
How long ?

This prying into the receding wells
this flying of pleasant-sounding clouds over the hills
but this giant stone didn't tear a bit
while your fibre of life is wearing thin.
How long ?

चाने से जा भाँके नूरज भण्डार में
कोई की श्रंगणाई तदुप्रे अन्धार में
मिनासा ई रहणो छ—
कतना दन वण गूँगा ढोर ? कतना दन और ?

आओ चूरो पाड़ां ई वादल महल में
तण्ड्यो नवूँ राखो छो रुई का फहल में
यो खटको मटज्या
पण चाहीजे भटका में जोर ! कतना दन और ?

The sun quietly peeps into a rich home,
a heart beats nervously in a dark house.
Do you still wish to be human beings ?
Not by being dumb cattle, I suppose.
How long ?

Let us rip open this palace of cloud
let us not keep a wee straw in a cotton coil.
All this danger can end for good
if you strike and strike hard.

RAMESHWAR DAYAL SHRIMALI (b 1938), poet and short-story writer, is currently on the Advisory Panel of Rajasthani to the Central Sahitya Akademi. Born in Karachi, Pakistan, he had, owing to uncertain political circumstances in the country, a very irregular education. Nonetheless, he succeeded in obtaining his M. A. (Hindi & Economics) from the Rajasthan university.

He brought out three books of poems : *Hadi Rani*, *Bavano Himalo*, *Mharo Gaon*. Also, he edited many books in collaboration with Rawat Saraswat. His prose work *Salwatan*, a collection of short stories, earned him the first prize of the Rajasthan Sahitya Akadmi in 1977. In the following year he won the Vishnuhari Dalmia Puraskar for his poetry.

He has written a good number of books in Hindi too, of which *Kautilya* (poetry) has been rated very high by critics. He is the founder-secretary of Saraswati Samaj, Jalore. At present, he is the Head Master of Government Secondary School, Jawali, District Pali.

स्हारा मास्टर

यारे मैं काँई गुण है
के तर्नैं नमां, गैला मास्टर !
राजनेतावां री जरूरत मुजव
तूं को करवा सकै नीं

'प्रदर्शन'

को भड़कवा सकै नीं
'आन्दोलन'

को नगवा सकै नीं नारा
को दिड़कवाय सकै नीं पेट्रोल
को घटवा सकै नीं बसां
को चलवा सकै नीं द्युरा
यारे मैं काँई गुण है
के तर्नैं नमां ?

× × ×

MY MASTER

Why should we bow to you, my odd Master ?
Do you have any special virtue ?
You cannot arrange quick processions
the call of the politicians.
You cannot stir agitations
and make people raise slogans.
You cannot sprinkle petrol
and set the buses on fire.
You cannot incite a free play of daggers.
Why should we bow to you ?

× × ×

भूठ,
ये जितरो पढ़ायो
मगळो उ भूठ
अवै को होवै नी
एक घर एक दो
एक नै काटर
दो किया जावै
नूरज रे चक्कर
को लगावै नी घरती
आ तो मोता रे चक्कर लगावै
ग्याए कोणी वगावै
आदमी नै पिटत
आदमी नै पीमो पिटत वगावै
देम ताएगी सहादत देवण मूँ
महीद को होवै नी
सहीद तो
कुरमी मार्थ वैद्योदां रा
रिस्तेदार होवै
आने मूँ ऊचो वाप कोती
मता है
घरती मूँ मारी मा कोती
कुरमी है ।
ये छनै निन भोळायो
म्हारा मास्तर !

Whatever you have taught me
is lies,
proven lies.

One plus one does not make two
now one is cut and made two.

The earth does not go round the sun
it goes round gold:

Learning does not make a scholar
it is gold that makes one so.

Deeds of sacrifice do not make a patriot,
the kin of 'Chairs' are born patriots.

You said :

No father is higher than the Heavens.

O, no !

Power is higher by far.

You said :

No mother is greater than the earth.

O, no !

The Chair is much, much higher.

I feel cheated,
my dear Master !

Note : *Master* is used ironically here. It means 'teacher' in a general sense. I have retained the word for its sound effect.

म्हारो गांव

कढैर्द कीं तो वदलियों नीं
 बठे रो बठे है
 म्हारो गांव
 लोग कैवे है
 के डी. डी. टी. मूं
 माद्वर मरै
 पण अवै माद्वर होयग्या है
 डी. डी. टी. रे हेवा ।

लोग तो वैम में जीवे
 जयप्रकास रे
 जेल में रैवण मूं
 राज कोनी वदल्यो
 राज तो तस्करा माथै
 'मीसा' लागण मूं वदल्यो है
 ज्ञादा सिवाय
 म्हारा गांव रे मिनसां रे थोट नै
 कुणसी ठोड हो ?

पड़ग्यो ।
 पण वै तो बठे रा बठे है
 रामन री लाइना में
 जहरता नै टापता

X X X

MY VILLAGE

Nothing has changed here.
Everything is as it was.
They say :
DDT kills mosquitoes
but now the mosquitoes kill DDT.

People live in a paradise
of their own making.
The government did not change
because JP went to jail,
it changed
because MISA hung over the heads of smugglers.
Which place did my people have
for their votes
except the pit of garbage ?
Now the vote is cast.
But they are where they were
standing in the long queues at the ration-shops
looking for daily needs.

x x x

महनै तो माचास्ती
अनम्भी होवै है
कै अष्टे
इस म्हारै गांव री माटी मैं है
कियां जगम्या होस्ती
तिनक
कै नुमास, कै गांधी, कै नगतसिंध
कांट ठा' चोस्तो हो
आं रे मरणी रो मोहरत
कै कांट ठा' चमकाया आं नै
मुवेळा री मोत
नीतर
म्हारै गांव मैं तो
बड़ा-बड़ा विनूवियस
होमाळो हो'र
तिन-तिन कर पीघळे !

I often wonder
how men like Tilak, Subhas, Gandhi,
and Bhagat Singh were born
in my village ?

Good, they died at the appropriate time
and their timely death, in fine,
brought them glory of the highest kind.

Otherwise
in my village
(men) as big as Vesuvius
turn cold like the Himalayas
and melt inch by inch !

भूम
अर प्रग्नान
अर प्रत्याघार
बग्नाद दीना है
म्हारे गांव री जनता नै
गांधी जी रा तीन बांदरा
यै
समझता थकां ई को देखै नीं
देखता थकां ई को बोलै नीं
जाणता थकां ई को सुणै नीं
कदेई को सुणै नीं
मर्त री कोई लाल वात
कदेई को कसीजै नीं
वांरी मूठियां
कदेई को उठै नीं
मर्योड़ा हाथ !

Hunger
Ignorance, and
Tyranny
have turned the people of my village
into the three monkeys of Gandhi :
they know but they do not see,
they see but they do not speak,
they feel but they do not listen.
They never listen
to the angry talk of their well-being,
nor do they ever tighten their fists,
nor do they ever raise their grieved hand.

RAWAT SARASWAT (b 1922) is a distinguished Rajasthani scholar, critic, editor, and poet. His period of literary activity spans over forty years during which he tirelessly worked for the promotion of the Rajasthani language and literature. His formal education (M. A. Hindi and LL. B.) brought him neither joy nor any sense of satisfaction: he wanted to do something of enduring value.

In 1944, he set out to serve the cause of Rajasthani leaving his lucrative job in the bargain. In his youthful enthusiasm, he went from place to place digging out the unknown treasures of Rajasthani literature. He edited *Dingal Geet*, *Dalpat Vilas*, *Mahadeo Parvati Ri Veli*, *Aaj Raa Kavi*, *Jankavi Ustad*, *Rajasthan Ke Kavi* and translated into Rajasthani Tagore's *Bansari* and *Jafarnama* of Guru Govindsingh. Surprisingly enough, he did not bring out a collection of his own poems.

He is well-known as the founder-editor of *Maruvani*, the first and foremost Rajasthani monthly. He is also the founder-member of the Rajasthan Bhasa Prachar Sabha, Jaipur, under the auspices of which he conducted many examinations in Rajasthani. Also, he organised a number of literary seminars that are still remembered for their fruitfulness and sense of direction.

Appreciating his services to the cause of literature, the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy honoured him with the 'Vishista Sahityakar Puraskar'. He has been chosen recently Chairman of the Rajasthani Bhasa Sahitya Sangam (Akademy), Bikaner.

He lives at D-282 Miran Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur-6.

हेलो

मंत्र फूंकदा देवरो, बाज्या' ज जंगी होन
हेलो आइयो रणनीत रो

उठ जाग मा रा लाढला, अब चपत आयो चेत रो
हेलो आइयो रणनीत रो

लोरियां री ताल, सोबत पानगुँ हुनराइयो
दूधां वार धपाइयो, निस नैगुँ जाग जपाइयो
अब उठ सपूती रा पूत, मांगूं मोल मूँथै हेत रो
अब चपत आयो चेत रो, हेलो आइयो रणनीत रो

जामलु जाया बीर म्हारा, गोद मोद खिलाइया
नित सलूरुँ रातडी रा तार थे वंचवाइया
उठ आरतडे रे नेम मांगूं, सीम दुसमी देत रो
हेलो आइयो रणनीत रो

THE CALL

Chorus: Awake, arise, Mother's darling !
there is a call from the battlefield,
conches are blown in temples
and war-drums beaten;
the time has come for you now
to awake, arise.

Mother: I rocked you to sleep in a golden cradle
to the tune of sweet lullabies
with nights lodged in my eyes.
I fed you to the fill with milk
overflowing from my breasts
but the time has come for you now
dear son,
to awake, arise
and also for me to get
the reward of my labour and life.

Sister: I fondled you with great care and love,
tied the holy Rakhi on your wrist
year after year,
but the time has come for you now
to awake, arise
and also for me to beg,
the head of the foe will be my prize.

चौमुख दिवलो जोय, रंगमृत्लां' ज सेज संवारती
बादीनै नै बांहड़ी धर सीस, मुळक मनावती
अब जाग लसकरिया, लज्ज सिणगार धण परणेत रो
हेलो आइयो रणकेत रो

मेवड़लां झट्ट सींच सूखी धरण धन निपजाइयो
काढ़ थूंड़ काळजै सूं नीर ठंडो प्याइयो
अब जाग मुरथरिया, चुकावण करज वालू रेत रो
हेलो आइयो रणकेत रो

Wife : I lighted the lamp in the bed chamber for long,
rested your head in my arms for long,
tickled you, naughty one, with a smile for long :
but the time has come for you now
to awake, arise
and also for me to say :
let my ornaments weep and sigh.

Land : I gave you golden harvests in dry seasons
gave you cold water of deeper regions
but the time has come for you now
to awake, arise
and also for me to claim :
Son of the Desert !
pay off the debt of the caressing sands.

काळ

कुणा कैवे काळ पडग्यो ?

कर्दै है काळ ?

तिसाई धरती रै ताळवै निधोड़ा

बछवद्धतो बालू सूर्योड़ा

फूस री टापरयो श्रर भूपां रा

उज्ज्योड़ा गांवां श्रर डालियां रा

श्री निरमामिया जीव

क्यूं जलम लियो इण खोड़ मैं ?

कायर हा, चुजदिल हा, वेवकूफ हा

गांव रा पुरखा

जिका डण निरमामी धरती मैं

लुक'र प्राण बचाया !

लूंठा हा, बीर हा, सायर हा वै

जिका मालू री धरती नै दावी राखी

श्रर देमनिकालो दियो वां नाजोगां नै

तनतोड़ मैनत कर भी

जिका दो जूणा टुकडा नौं तोड़ पाया

गवां री ज्यूं नद-नद भी

जिका टेम पर दागां री जगां लातां साई

बारे नावर धरती रा मुम कोनी सिरज्योड़ा

भाग री भगुमहिता मैं

वांरी कुडली नै जगां कोनी !

FAMINE

Famine ?

Where is famine ?

Sticking charred to the palate of this land
roasting in the burning sands
you unfortunate dwellers of the villages and hamlets
of huts and hovels,
why did you take birth in this infernal land ?

Their ancestors were cowards, chicken-hearted, and

[simpletons

who hid themselves in this land
and saved their lives !

And they were brave, mighty, lion-hearted
who kept the rich, fertile land under their sway
and banished those nincompoops
who strained every nerve of their body
only *not* to get a morsel of bread,
who though overladen like a donkey
earned kicks instead of hard-earned food !

The earthly comforts were not made for them,
their fate, in fact, had severed itself from the Wheel of

[Fortune !

थे अंजन रा कृष्णा, थे दासों रा भेत
 थे गरणाता ट्रैक्टर, थे कोसां लग येत
 थे छळदलती नहरो, थे कमतरिया चाकर
 थे फारम, थे जीपां, था दासु, था चोधर
 मुगा रा थे माधव बांरा किया हो नके ?
 बीजली सूं गरमायोद्धा
 बीजली मूं ठण्डायोद्धा
 बीजली भूं चमकायोद्धा
 बीजली ज्यूं पलपद्धाता
 थे ग्रानीमान बंगला
 बारां किया हो नके ?

थे कुदल ज्यूं दमकती, चम्पण ज्यूं मटकती
 नागरुडान्ना सा केसां रा जूडा सजावती
 चोलीदार ट्वाङ्गज्ञां में
 गोरे चीकगै ट्रील रा पछका मारती
 ट्रैरानीस में नगरर करती,
 गरमगती कागं नै दोडाती
 थे नाटुरुडी हिरण्यानियां—
 बांरी छियां हो नके ?

These tubewells, these vineyards,
these zooming tractors, these far-flung fields,
these swelling canals, these devoted servants,
these farms, these jeeps, this wine, this awe,
these means of comforts,
how can these be theirs ?

These stately bungalows
warmed by electricity
cooled by electricity
illumined by electricity
shining like electricity,
how can they be theirs ?

These delicate-framed, these deer-eyed women
sparkling like gold
sweet-smelling like sandal,
who wear glamorous hair-dos
who drive fast the shimmering motor-cars
who swish past in terelyne dresses,
whose smooth, eloquent flesh
winks out of their new-fangled blouses,
how can they be theirs ?

वरती रो श्री मुख्य वार्गे है
 जिका नुजबल रा धर्मी है
 जिका गज रो कालजो अर
 मिनत रो मगज रामै
 जिका मैं हीमलो है संघर्ती मूँ जूझर्णे रो
 अर सामरथ है चिरते वरतत मूँ
 बांगां भर लड़र्णे री ।

जीव रो भव जीव ई है, नेम यो कुदरत रो
 मद्दनी नै मद्दनी या, जिनावर जिनावर नै
 मिनग नै मिनग या, वस फरक है याम्हे रो
 जीवेलो थो ई, जिको दूजां नै या मके
 नायर पचा मके
 जीवलु रो हृक तो बम ममरथ ई ले याके ।

थै तदकरिया नेता, थै धूमपोर अफगर
 थै दलबदलू एम. एल. ए., सौदागर मंत्री
 आ नाटमेंस परमिट री विणजारण मता
 थै काल्जा रै नांव पर तकाल्या रा गटका
 थै फर्जी मनूर्ध्या लिल तिजूर्ध्या भरणा
 थै दग्ध्या रा करज कर्द्या दीम-दीम वरसाँ
 थित थै 'विकास' नै दाजां नै तरसाँ
 थै मनद्या मान है, साम्बत है, प्रादू है
 फरक है नांव रो, तरीके रो ढंग रो ।

The paradise of the earth, dear,
belongs to the plucky and strong-armed,
to those who are manly and big-bosomed,
to those who are sharp and skilled,
to those who have the guts to strive and fight
to those who have the grit to grapple
with the dismal times.

Life thrives on life
is the law of nature.

Fish swallows fish, animal, animal
and man, man :
the difference is in the style of eating !

He alone will survive who can eat up others
eat up and also digest.

The brave alone have the right to live.

These smuggling leaders
these corrupt officers
these shifting MLAS
these mortgaged ministers !

This big gulp of money in the name of famines.
This stuffing of coffers by fabricating wages.
This debt of billions for decades.
Woe to such 'Development' where we starve for food.
All this is true, habitual, and undying
the difference lies only in name, approach, and style.

वै राजा, वै राष्ट्रां, श्रै नेता, नेताण्यां
 वै जागीरां घटती, श्रै परमीटां कटती
 न भेद है जमाने रो, न काम रो भेद है ।
 आज जिका भोल्हा है, निरवल है, भूमा है
 वै पैनां भी नोल्हा हा, निरवल हा, भूमा हा ।

मान रे भरोसे जिका गोटां पै माथो टेक
 जुग-नुग मूं मेह री उड़ीक मैं विताई जूण
 बाने हक जीवणा रो ? किसो श्रो कायदो ?
 जीवण री चाह वा, दीवै री लोय सी
 चोरती निरासा रो घटाटोर अंधारो
 संभल-गभल, कोटां नै करड़, पग मांटती
 बढ़ती ई जावै वस अणथक वण चालती ।

काळ रे नांव मूं भीग पर जीवणियां
 दान रा दाणा दा दान-जल पीवणियां
 दया रो मजूरी पर माटी सिर ढोवणियां
 भूम रे रोग मूं भुर-भुर कर रोवणियां ।
 मिना रा जाया, थे हांगो कर श्रूठो !
 ललकारो बगत नै, गरमावो मून नै ।

Those kings and queens gave away the Jagirs
these leaders of both sexes issue permits !

Neither the style of work nor the times
separate that from this.

Those who were starving, weak, and innocent
are starving, weak, and innocent even today.

Those who pinned their faith on fate
and waited, heads drooping, life-long for rains
do they have a right to live ? Strange ?

That urge for life, like the flame of a lamp
can tear the looming darkness of pale hope,
can crush the thorns strewn along the way
and move on and on and on
unerringly, and without a pause.

You beggars
subsisting on the doles of famine-relief,
you lickers of charity
you swillers of charity
you niggers, you coolies
you weepers ever consumed by hunger.

Awake, arise ! Play the man !

You Sons of Man !

Throw a challenge to these doleful times !

दूरव रा भैरवदूत मंदिरो लाया है
नरमन री बाली सूर्यन री गरमी रो
करमो री ललकारो धूजती धगती रो
धान रे गेतां रंग-गाचती जवानी रो ।
दूरव रो होनो श्री टकगयो समदां जा
नरमन री आधी लगी केरल री कांकड़ो ।

जट-जट करमो है, भूत है, काळ है
बट-बट नरमन री कांति भूचाल है
नरमन है वाइमेर, नरमन है वीकानेर
जैमनसेर जाथपुर जालोर नरमन है
लाएं है मोल है करमो री जिदमो
दालां बिन पाली बिन दम तोड़े जट-जट
बट-बट गांवां में, टाथ्यां में, झूंपां में
नरमन री आनमा चीन-चीन ललकारे
शूठो है करमो, मांटी मुरवरिया,
आरी ठोकर जुग पमवाड़ो केरमी ।

The message has come from the east :
the message of Hot Blood from Naxalbari
the message of the land shuddering
with the defiant voices of the peasantry,
the message of youthful dalliance amidst rice-rich fields.
This storm of Naxal has touched the bounds of Kerala.

Wherever there is hunger, famine, and peasantry
the sure force is the Naxal revolution.

Now Barmer is Naxal, Bikaner is Naxal
Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Jalore all Naxals.
Wherever the priceless life of a peasant
in a hut, hamlet, or a village
wilts for lack of food or water,
the soul of a Naxal cries there in agony.
Sons of sand !
Rise and make men of yourselves.
Your kicks will turn the tide of the times.

SANWAR DAIYA (b 1948), short-story writer and poet, was born in Bikaner. After his graduation he worked as teacher in a school. His early attempts at story-writing yielded good results. *Asawadai Pasawadai*, a collection of short-stories, brought him awards from the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy as well as the Marwari Sammelan, Bombay.

His two volumes of verse, *Man-gant* and *Kaal Aur Aaj Rai Bichhai* established his reputation as a poet.

His address :

C/o Kani Ram Sagar Mal
Jail Road
Bikaner

कोयलो इत्तो काळो कोनी हुवै

थे पड़ी-पड़ी म्हारो अपमान ना करो
 अपमान मैवण री नी भेक हृया करै है-
 ने आ ना भूलो

यारै एगा थप्पड़ रो उष्ठलो
 अवै मैं पगा थप्पड़ मुं देवूंता
 (यावै गाल मार्य थप्पड़ माय'र
 जीवणो गान यारै सार्में मेन'र
 मैं गांधी वजणो कोनी नावूं !)

यां रो टेरीकॉट्टन रो मूट
 बाटा रा चमचमाट करता जूता
 रंगीन टाई अर चस्मो
 ई जुग री फैसन हृवैला
 पण नट्ठै-डीवटी रो चोळो अर पजामो
 घसीउयोहै तळां आळो चप्पन
 मैं भी पैर्या करूं हूं
 (मैं नांगो-उषाङ्गो कोनी !)

COAL

Don't insult me again and again.
After all, there is a limit to my endurance too.

I shall give you now a slap for a slap.
(I do not wish to be a Gandhi anymore
who would turn his right cheek
after a slap on the left !)

Your terrycotton suits
your shining Bata shoes
your colourful tie and goggles
may be in vogue today.
But the rough cotton pyjama and kurta,
and chappals with worn-out soles
I too wear.
(I am not just bare !)

जैम्बर में थारी कुर्सी माथे पूमे पंसो
पण्डिती चजावतां ई
चपदासी हाजर हूवै
पण मुणो—
मैं जी चार टांगों प्राळी कुर्सी माथे वैद्युतो हूं
(मैं अधर मैं कोनी लटकूँ !)

ये हरगीजता हूरोता
कै थाँ रै दस्ततां मूँ
म्हारी तिणगा रो विल पास हूवै
पण मुणो—
तीस दिनां ताँड़
गून-पमीनो थ्रेक कर्यां पद्ये
म्हारै श्रांगगृही मैं शूमर घालै
पहनी तारीय रो मुख
(कृष्ण विड्व वगाण वस्त्रीस लेवणियो
चारण-भाट कोनी मैं !)

ये होरा गरा
थ्रेकाइट गरा
पण मैं भी 'कावेन युप' रो हूं
मुणो—
मैं कीमलो हूं
अर याद रातो
कोई बोयलो इतों काळों कोनी हूवै
कै जग्यो ई लाल नीं हूवै !

The fan hovers over your head in your chamber
the peons are at your beck and call
but listen,
I too sit on a four-legged chair.
(I do not hang in mid-air !)

You may gloat
that your signature clears my salary bill
but listen.
I pour off sweat for thirty long days
then the pleasures of each first¹
weave a dance in my yard.
(I am no charan or Bhat²
who would sing in praise of trash
only to get a few coppers !)

You may be a genuine diamond
a genuine graphite
but I am also of the 'carbon group'.
Listen, I am coal.
And remember
no coal is so black
that it never turns red ever so little !

1. First of every month.

2. A snide reference to poets who compose 'flattery' more than poetry.

तटस्थ लोगां रै देस मैं

मूँ दोकारे
मूरज चधार्छ हो गीरा
ग्रामे मूँ
मैं पूछ्यो यां मूँ-
तावडो कितो आकरो है ?
ये योळ्या हंस'र-
हुवैला !

ग्रामावस री रात
जे मैं पूछ्तो यां मूँ-
ग्रन्थारो कितो काळो है
तद भी
ये कंवता हंस'र-
हुवैला !

IN THE COUNTRY OF THE NEUTRALS

Right at noon
when the mid-day sun
was flinging flaming coals
from the sky, I asked him :
Isn't it very hot today ?
Sneeringly he replied :
 Let it be !

If, in the pitch dark of night
I ask him :
Isn't it impossibly dark ?
He would nonetheless reply gloatingly :
 Let it be !

लमायो मनै
 वां नै कोई सरोकार कोनी
 सियालै री ठंड सूं
 उन्हालै री तपत सूं
 फागण चैत री
 हवा सूं
 चीमासै री विरता सूं
 वसंत-पतझड़ मैं
 तिलतै-झड़तै फूलां सूं
 नित रेवणियै कांटां सूं !

ये तटस्थ है
 साव तटस्थ
 आदमी री जिदगाणी अर मौत सूं भी
 वां रै भां सूं
 की भी हूवो
 पण हूवो जहर

ये तो जागै
 वग ग्रेक ई यात
 जो की भी हूवणी है
 हूवैला...हूवैला...हूवैला...

I find he is concerned
neither with the coldness of winter
nor with the heat of summer
nor with the winds of Fagan and Chait¹
nor with the rains of the rainy season
nor with the blooming flowers of spring
nor with the fading ones of autumn
nor with the ever-living thorn !

He is neutral
wholly neutral
about the life and death of Man.
As far as he is concerned
anything untoward may happen.
But happen it will !

He understands only one point :
What is to happen
is sure to happen,
will happen,
happen inevitably !

1. The two months of late spring and early summer.

SATYA PRAKASH JOSHI (b 1926), born and bred at Jodhpur, is a major Rajasthani poet with a number of publications to his credit. His books *Radha*, *Deeva Kanpai Kyun*, *Bambi*, *Laskhar Na Thamai* and *Bol Bharmali*, have brought him great honour and fame. The National Sahitya Akademy adjudged his *Bol Bharmali* as the best Rajasthani book of 1977 and gave him the highest award of poetry.

Mr Joshi is also known as an editor and translator. He edits the literary journal *Haraval* (which he himself founded) from Bombay where he works as Professor in a local college. He lives at 37-Marve Road, Malad, Bombay-64.

अरज

मारद माता भीम निवाजँ, यो वर दीजे
मन री वालों मैंज मुगाजँ, आगर दीजे

हदद प्रकट री मृत तुदावै
मवदा री मुलियो वण जावै
गाव निमट मवदा मैं आवै
वालो ! यो फिरियावर कीजे

प्रालो नूं मवदो मैं निरकूं
मवदा नूं लग पीडा परमूं
रात असर मवद नूं निरगूं
मवदो माही आदर दीजे

मवदा नूं भारी तुल जाऊं
मवदा नूं भंडो विक जाऊं
मवदा मैं जीजँ, मर जाऊं
मवदा री आगोतर दीजे

मारद माता भीम निवाजँ, यो वर दीजे
मन री वालों मैंज मुगाजँ, आगर दीजे

PRAYER

Bless me, O, Goddess Sharda, Bless me !
Bless me with right words, and an easy pen !

May my words echo the deeper feelings !
May my words turn into general sayings !
May my words wrap wisdom in them !
O Goddess ! Help me in this mission of mine.

May I endow words with blood !
May I reveal the pangs of life through words !
May I scan beauty and untruth through words !
May you, O Goddess, add charm to my words !

May I prove heavier than words !
May I prove dearer than words !
May I have my being and death in words !
May I have my next life in words !

Bless me, O Goddess Sharda, Bless me !
Bless me with right words and an easy pen !

दीया पतंगा रा दूहा

दीयो :

रात्री काया रूपकी, रंग विरंगा रंग
पञ्चवोता पंगवूभिया, थे वर्षे बढो पतंग

पतंगो :

गोतल बरगी देहशी, हिवरे छिलके नेह
दीवा म्हाने रोक मत, रगतां पीछी देह

दीयो :

बहु-बहु भूजल होवगो, दीर्घी म्हारो नेम
थे नोळा वर्दे रीभाया, किणसृ करियो प्रेम

पतंगो :

पेंतां जे विलमातियो, अवै न मायो यूण
दीवा युं जीवो नही, मरियां मिलसी युण

दीयो :

अदियो करे न नावांगो, कठप घणा दे काळ
काया रमसम कापवी, जद लागिनी भाळ

THE MOTH AND THE LAMP : A CONVERSATION

The Lamp :

You are tender like new leaves
you wear many hues,
unknown, you never spoke to me,
why burn yourself, dear moth, in vain ?

The Moth :

True, my body is golden,
love overflows my heart,
don't rob me, O lamp, of this chance
of dyeing my body in flame.

The Lamp :

I do two works at a time ;
burning defines and refines me, both;
To whom have you lost your little heart, dear,
who have you come to love ?

The Moth :

I wish you had forewarned me
but now it is too late,
death, death alone is my destiny
I must meet my fate.

The Lamp :

Listen ! none returns from the land of flames,
this is a very severe test,
your frail body will quiver, I know
when close to the fiery target.

पतंगोः

यागी श्रोलूः जायतां, मह नीनो दिन दाख
बल-बल मीतल होवस्या, धनी उडीकी मांझ

दीवोः

म्हे ती बलबल जागिया, ये बल जास्यो सोय
यो जीवगु रंग रानग्नो, के करस्यो यूं गोय

पतंगोः

हिवडे कीयो जानणो, ऊपर देवो मीत
बल-बल पाळो श्रीतरी, ये उं काढी स्त्रीक

दीवोः

मगम्भाया मानो नहीं, भालां गेलो फाग
कार्ये बलणो फेर है, विन म्हाया दिन भाग

पतंगोः

भग दूर्दे विगती करां, मांझ पट्टण गी देर
नगो जलग ते ग्रावस्या, कालै बलवा फेर

The Moth :

I have passed the flaming day
singing in praise of you,
in fire I'll cool my nerves,
I await that evening, by you !

The Lamp :

When I burn I am alive,
if you burn you will die,
life is precious, dear angel,
finish it not for a pie.

The Moth :

First you kindled light in my heart
now you teach me this !

Love is best when burning, you said,
and you set this path for all.

The Lamp :

You have learnt nothing from me still :
go if you wish, play with flames,
my fate is clear and assured :
next day I am to be in flames.

The Moth :

Let the evening come
I'll pray for the end of this life,
the new birth I'll have again
only to die in red flames.

जागण रो गीत

मींच माँझियां कर अंधारो
मत अंधारो सहो
जागता रहो
ताकता रहो
जागता रहो

सपनां रा राजा चंदरमा, इमरत पी मर जासी
सोना री जागीरां खोकर से तारा घर जासी
द्विण में उठसी रेणादे रा काढा पड़दा
चन्द्राणां री किरणां सूं ठगणी ढीया डर जासी
नवी जात में रात्र भरोसो
नवी का'णियां कहो
जागता रहो

BE OPEN-EYED

Don't close your eyes
and invite darkness
rather
be careful
be watchful
be open-eyed.

Soon
the beautiful moon, the king of the sky,
will drink up his heavenly dews
and die.

The stars, the little lords
denuded of their scattered wealth
will go back home
and sigh.

The blinds will be undrawn
and then
the crafty darkness
will not face
the glare of the rising sun.

Have faith in new feats
spin new tales
be open-eyed
don't go stale.

सीटी रो सरणाटो वाजै, मील मजूरी चाला
चेता में पंछीड़ा बोलै, हळ रा ठाट संमाळा
हाट हटड़ियां खोलां, दिन री वाल्द आई
मैणत भूखी रहे न कालै, इसो जमानो पालां
उर्गे है सोना रो सूरज
मत आलस में वहो
जागता रहो

When the siren calls, rush to the mill
when the birds sing, go to the fields
open new marts, open new fairs
the wares are in, bright and fair.

Let us make a brave new world
where hunger doesn't haunt the toil.

The golden sun is rising

up, up, up

don't be idle

be careful

be watchful

be open-eyed.

TEJ SINGH JODHA (b 1950) was born at Ransisar, Nagaur. He had his M. A. degree from Rajasthan University, Jaipur. Among the poets of post-independence era, Mr. Jodha is one of those few who talk of Rajasthani language and literature with love and pride. His book *On/un Ri Olyan* is inspired by the happy memories of his grandfather. This book is half-nostalgic and half-critical. He also edited *Rajasthani Ek, Deeth, and Hemani*.

These days he lectures on Hindi literature at Mohta College, Sadulpur (Churu).

पीणो सांप

चेतो

चेतो के यांरी छाती माथे
कुंडाळो घाल'र नासां सा'रे
फण साध्यां बैठो है पीणो सांप
पीवै मासा, भरोसो अर सांस

पोछड़ी जद ओ
पूंछ रो फटकारो देय'र जावैला
तद थांनै देस अर आजादी रो
ग्ररथ समझ में आवैला

हतमाग

के मोड़ो हृय जावैला
मोड़ो हृय जावैला

THE DRINKING SNAKE

Beware,
the drinking snake sits coiled up masterfully
upon your chest, close to the nostrils,
with his hood held erect ;
he drinks up your language, faith, and breath.

Leaving, he will whip you with his tail.
You will, then, come to know
what freedom, and the country means ?

Alas, by then
you will be late
alarmingly late !

(The poem is based on a belief that the snake of a 'Peevana'
i. e. 'drinking' kind comes at night and manages to sit quietly on
the chest of the sleeper. It exhales poison which the sleeper,
unconsciously, draws in. And finally the sleeper dies.)

ओळूँ रो ओळ्यां

कूवेळा दे गोफण में
भाटै ज्यूं वायो मन्नै
सै म्हारा म्हां सूं भाजै
हं वरनाटा द्यूं जुन्नै

टांचा लायोडी ठोडां
ज्यूं गूंद वरै वांठां में
बीयां रिस पीड़ा भेळी
हैं घंदां रे आंटां में

पीड़ीजूं पोलै कांकड़
ज्यूं ऊंदरिया विल घालै
कै श्रोळूं कोडीनगरो
मनडै नै चूटै चालै

X

X

X

BAD TIMES HAVE THROWN ME*

Bad times have thrown me
like a stone from a sling,
the more I run to woo friends
the more they fly n fling.

As the cuts in a tree ooze
and make the golden gum,
my wounded heart is oozing
and tying strands of pretty tunes.

When I see the burrows of rats
in forests that aren't dense,
my memories, like ants, ply back
and eat my heart that's tense.

X

X

X

यारूं जावा रै पच्छै
थारो म्हारो करवा मैं
लार्या सगळा, नीं धापै
घण्यापै नैं भरवा मैं

म्हारी पांती मैं ओळूं
आपै रैगी, हूं धीज्यो
मनै चाइजै कीं नीं
थै सै कीं गिण-गिण लीज्यो

Grandpa, you have gone to heaven
and they are busy saying :
‘this mine, that thine’
fighting for their rights.

I have nothing but sweet memories
as my share and my joy,
you quibblers, count all bits
even lick up the tiniest toy.

* From his book *Onlun Ri Olyan*.

VISHWANATH SHARMA 'VIMLESH' (b 1927) is the most well-known Rajasthani writer both among the scholars and the laymen. He writes not only smoothly and ingeniously but also entertainingly. In the province of humour and satire, he reigns supreme with an impressive number of books to his credit. His well-known books are : *Satapakavani*; *Chhedakhani*; *Kucharani*; *Tasakoli*; *Nav Ras Main Ras Hasya*; and *Janta Ko Darbar*.

He is also the recipient of the Rajasthan Sahitya Akademy award for his *Ram Katha*.

His Hindi books include *Shakuntala*; *Kuchh Hansana*; *Kuchh Rona*; and *Vedana*. His four new books in Rajasthani are ready for publication.

He teaches Hindi at Seth Moti Lal College, Jhunjhunu.

दोस्त की सलाह

एक जिगरी दोस्त-

मने आकर कै बोल्यो-‘विमलेस’

लांग बदल-बदल कै आप आपका भेस

बदल दियो पूरे को पूरो देस

एक ही झटकै मैं कोई ऊपर चढ़यो है

तो कोई नीचै पड़्यो है

पण तूं यार बठ्ठ को बठ्ठ खड़्यो है !

तूं भी कोई नयो किड़को ल्या

चुनाव नहीं लड़ सकयो तो कोई वात नहीं

ऐया ही कोई चालती पून सैं लड़

ऊपर नहीं चढ़ सकयो तो नीचै ही पड़ !

पण एक जगां खड़्यो मत रह

नहीं तो पिछतावैगो

क्यूं कै, ऐयां को जमानू बार-बार नहीं आवैगो !

FRIENDLY ADVICE

Drawing me close,

my bosom friend said :

“Vimlesh ! People have changed the complex of this
[country

merely by changing clothes,

some have gone up in one stroke

and some gone down

but you, my friend, are where you were !

You, too, should begin a new stunt.

It doesn't matter if you couldn't contest the election.

Go headlong against the flowing current

just for the fun of it,

if go up you couldn't, then go down !

But don't stand fixed

otherwise, you are bound to feel sorry

for such chances are rare in life !

यार देनतो सही समै की रपतार
जहिं नाम से घरती कांपती, आज वै नुद कांपरेया है !
या के होई, दयूं होई ? या भी तो नहीं मांपरेया है !
एक ही चुटकी जो कर्या लान्ना लान्ना जेल्ला में बंद !
कलम बंद, जुबान बंद !
ऐया को कर दियो पूरो देस निस्पंद !
बांके भी नाम्य का सितारा पड़गा मंद
दयूं के नुनाव के बगत एक-एक दिन में
वै काररेया बीस बीस दीरा
पीछे भी बांकी सतरंज का उत्तरेया सारा ही मौरा
और जो जेल्ला में नस्ता दुर्दिन का येष्टा
वै राट्रपति मवन में याटरेया है येष्टा !
ई नानर ही तन्ने कहूं हैं
की देश बदलना देर नी लार्म
भाग को वेरो नहीं यो कद सोवै, कद जागै
नूं तो ममभदार है, कवि है
गूल्योहै भाग ने भी जगा मर्के है
कोई की दिन मै लेकर दिमाग मै आग लगा मर्के है !
ती लगा, गाइयो के देखे है ?
हा बोन, बोन कुद तो बोन, लिया एक दोन
और कुद नहीं तो हार्योहै नेतावां का पोल मोन

Dear friend ! See the moving hand of Time.
They are in jitters whose names gave the earth the
[shivers.

How has it happened ?
And why so ?
They themselves cannot surmise.
Those who sent millions of persons to jail at one blow,
gagged their mouths, muzzled their pen,
and unnerved the whole country—
their star of fortune too has faded in a wink,
for, during the election days
they hopped about scores of places each day
and in their absence, the same time,
their well-arranged chess-board went upside down;
and those who suffered the buffets of misfortune in jails
are now giving away sweets in the Rashtrapati Bhawan !
That's why I tell you :
Time changes in a jiffy.

Nobody knows when fate sleeps, and when she awake.
You are a wise man, a poet
who can wake up even slumberous fate,
who can ignite fire in the head as well in the heart.
Then fire a shot ! Why wait ?
Well, speak out. Fetch a drum.
If nothing else, unmask the discredited, the damned.

आ, राजनीति के मैदान में आ
 दीकर के घोड़ी सी भाँग, ठोककर के जांग
 पांचना मार करके लगा एक छनांग
 तूं जी तेरे प्रियपल से इस्तीफो मांग !
 द्रोकेसरों का दो गुट बगा करके आपस में निहाड़े
 और प्रथीने छोरों से हङ्काल करवादे !
 और दूर गड्ढो देखवो कर तमासा
 के कठीने पड़र्या है जीत का पासा !
 जीत होतां ही बठीने ही कूदज्या
 और बनों ने समझा दे
 के भाया में तो पैल्यां ही कूद होर्यो थी
 पगु कूद नहीं सकयो !
 कद्दूंके मेरी जुवान दांतों के बीच में फंसरी थी
 और मेरी कुर्सी गोत्रीना पांच कुट नीचे घंसरी थी !
 वो बगत में कैयां करतो न्याय की मांग
 कुमीं के ही बंधरी थी मेरी दोन्हुं टांग !
 अब तो घगूं ही हीर्यो है घोलो
 पगु नीर देर अवेर जद भी छोड़यायो चोगो"

“Come, my dear, come to the open field of politics
have a little bhang, slam your thighs,
roll up your pants, and leap
upon your Principal to resign,
divide the professors into groups and make them fight.
On the other hand, coax the students to strike.
Stand aloof, watch the fun,
and see which way the cat jumps !
Then join the winning side
and put across your point of view saying
‘I was, dear, about to jump over
but failed to do so
as my tongue was intercepted by the teeth
and my chair, each day, sank deep and deep.
How could I, that time, cry for justice
since my own legs, round the chair, were tied.
Now I have no more any illusion.
Well, better late than never’.

इतनी बातों मुण्डके
दे तने राजी गुमी मिता लेके तो मिलज्याये
नहीं तो और कठीने विलज्याये !
गुमी के बगत कोई गमी थोड़ी ही है
ई देम में पार्टियों की कमी थोड़ी ही है !

हाँ बता तो मही धर में बात
कितना क प्रोफेसर है तेरे साथ
चुनाव भी करवायां तो
जाकी बोट गिरवा सकेगो के ?
कोई गुंडां बुन्डां से दोस्ती है के नहीं
वह नकली गोली चलवा सकेगो के ?
पग्गु गुंदा टाया होणा चाये, विस्थासी
जो आर्या विना ही भागज्या
या जीप जाप के ही मार के मागज्या
पग्गु मांगाग्गी तेरे नहीं नामज्या !

“Hearing these arguments
they should accept you in their fold without much fuss
if not, bump into some other camp !
Doleful tunes cannot mar our happy times.
Here is God’s plenty, *parties* in our land !

Let me know the truth, in good faith,
how many Professors are with you ?
In case we go in for election
will they or will they not contrive to get a few fake votes ?
What’s about your equation with the goondas ?
Will they or will they not manage some mock-firing
[anywhere ?

But see to it
that the goondas are skilled, trustworthy,
who can take to heels before the police come
who can hit the jeep or any other article
and run out of sight.

All through you should stay unhurt in this operation !

देत नई या तो राजनीति है
ई में सब काम करणा पड़े
दरणा भी पड़े और दरणा भी पड़े
गोली नाम्यां पीछे जीतो रेणू पड़े
और चिना नाम्यां मरणो पड़े !
या तो नाई राजनीति है
ई में सब काम करणा पड़े !
सो कर
चोड़ के स्तर, नजां ही नीचे उतर
पर एक जगां यद्यो मत रह
नहीं तो पिंडतावेंगो
बदूं के ऐंया को जमानूं यार बार-बार नहीं आवेंगो ।”

“Brother ! This is politics
and we have to do work of all kinds.
We threaten others; get threatened in return,
we have to stay alive with bullets in our bodies,
and also
we have to die without a bullet in us.
This is politics, dear,
we have to do work of all kinds.
You too should follow this.
Leave your heights
and come down below.
Don't stand fixed, however.
Otherwise you are bound to feel sorry
for such chances are rare in life !”

1. Refers to Shri Raj Narain.

हिन्दी दिवस पै भासण

हिन्दी दिवस की उपलब्धि में
साहित्य-परिवद को नमापती
मन्नी मासला देणार्ने बुनवायो
अर भेरे पूँचतां ही मन्ने व्यारो लै'र समझायो
बोल्यो—‘देणो, बैयो तो थे
बात बात में प्रगरेजो भाइता रो’
बापड़ी हिन्दी की टांग उगाइता रो’
एण आज तो हिन्दी दिवस है
सो पूरो ही मासला हिन्दी में दियो’

मैं बोल्यो—आ के बात कही, ‘विलीव मी’ ‘बाड गोड’
मैं भेरी पूरी ‘नाइक’ मैं—
एक ‘बड़’ मी इंगनिश को ‘यूज’ नहीं कर्यो है
नूँ भूदयाएँ क्यूँ डर्यो है ?’

मुलतां ही बो बोल्यो—राम, राम राम !
ये ‘नाइक’, ये ‘बड़’, ये ‘यूज’, ये सबद आपका है !

A LECTURE ON THE HINDI DIVAS

On the Hindi Divas¹

The President of the Sahitya Parishad²
asked me very cordially to give a lecture.
On my arrival he took me aside and said :
Look, day in and day out
you use English words in conversation
and very often knock down poor Hindi, with great gusto.

I said : What do you mean ?

'Believe me', 'By God'

I have never made 'Use' of an English 'Word'
in my whole 'Life'.

Why should you fear me for nothing ?

Hearing this, he was amazed

and he muttered : Good Heavens !

This 'Life', this 'Word', this 'Use'—are they yours ?

मैं कही-नहीं तो के अंगरेजों के बाप का है ?
 यो दो बरम पेल्यां वै ध्वनि देगा या
 अर जाता के पात्रा तेगा या ?
 कोई भी चीज भोत प्रेम मैं लो जावै
 अर नियोड़ी पात्री नहीं दो जावै ।

भोत बरमां पेल्यां-

राजा महाराजा महारे बड़कों नैं जमीन दी
 राजा भी सोया था, बड़का भी सोया था
 यूँ तो दी दी, अर यूँ यै लो
 अटीनैं राजा गया, अटीनैं जमीन गई
 देवा पट्टा था न्यारा न्यारा
 पल राजा अर जमीन,
 दोन्हुँ ही होगा राम का न्यारा !

तो तूं ग्रा मोर्जै-के भासा के गामलै मैं भी-
 मैं या ही गलती करूँ
 ग्रा गलती एक पट्यो लियो नहीं कर मके
 भासा का सबद, ग्राकाम को धरम है
 सबद अमर है, सबद नहीं मर मके !

“Are they then Englishmen’s or of their forebears ?”

[I quipped.

These words they gave us two hundred years ago
did they withdraw them while going back home ?
A gift, behold, is accepted with a deep sense of love
and once accepted never parted with.

Long long ago
the kings gave away lands to my forefathers
the kings were dunderheads, my forefathers dolts.
Why did they give, and why did they take ?
On the one hand, the kings bundled off
on the other, the lands
(although each agreement was separate).
Finally, kings and lands have both gone to the blue !

You think
I shall repeat the same mistake
in the province of language too !
An educated person cannot make such mistakes.
The words of a language belong to the vast expanse
[of the sky.
Words are eternal; words are undying.

ई गातर धंगेजी को दिनमनेरीं
गढ़े से उतर करके, मूँडी तछे पचरी है
बस योँही सी बचरी है !
एक बात घोर-हम उस देस के बासी हैं
जी देम का लोप, गार्गे लीखे अर पचारे में
कदे ही ओटा नहीं दिया
के देरी के के राया है !
अर बिना दुकार लियां पनाया है ।

ये तो मवद है मवद, मैं धंगेजी का सवद
गाँड़गा, पनावूंगा
ई गातर भाया, हिन्दी दिवस नहीं,
'देरी कोकनी'
'हिन्दी दे' मनाऊंगा ।

Therefore the English dictionary
—a thin part of it is left now—
is already down my throat, has gone right upto the navel !
One thing more. We belong to that country
where people in matter of eating, drinking, and digesting
have never lagged behind !
God knows what stuff they have eaten !
Eaten & without an open pronouncement assimilated too !

These are only words, poor words.
I will eat these English words
and digest them too.
For their sake, dear 'un,
I shall, 'very frankly', celebrate
not the Hindi Divas
but 'HINDI DAY'.

1 Day.

2 Literary Association.

Note : The words in single inverted commas are used in the original poem as such.

